

## **SPANISH REHEARSAL**

*By the same Author*

THE HARROVIANS  
LOOSE ENDS  
FAMILY NAME  
WITHIN THE PRECINCTS OF THE PRISON  
THE MOUNTAINS OF YOUTH  
A HISTORY OF SKI-ING  
ALPINE SKI-ING  
THE COMPLETE SKI-RUNNER  
THE ALPS  
SWITZERLAND, ITS LITERARY, HISTORICAL AND TOPO-  
GRAPHICAL LANDMARKS  
THE ITALIAN LAKES  
VENICE, ITS STORY, ARCHITECTURE AND ART  
THE FLIGHT FROM REASON  
THINGS THAT HAVE PUZZLED ME  
JOHN WESLEY  
ROMAN CONVERTS  
NOW I SEE  
A SAINT IN THE SLAVE TRADE  
WITHIN THAT CITY  
DIFFICULTIES (with MONSIGNOR R. A. KNOX)  
IS CHRISTIANITY TRUE ? (with C. E. M. JOAD)  
SCIENCE AND THE SUPERNATURAL (with PROFESSOR J. B. S.  
HALDANE, F.R.S.)

# SPANISH REHEARSAL

By  
ARNOLD LUNN

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## PREFACE

“ JE n'impose rien ; je ne propose rien : j'expose,” quotes Lytton Strachey in the Preface to *Eminent Victorians*, that brilliant and prejudiced book, every page of which is permeated by his Voltairean philosophy.

Every writer is biassed, and the true distinction is not between the biassed and the unbiassed, but between those who are and those who are not aware of their own prejudices.

Every writer must pass through the customs of which his readers are the officials. Lytton Strachey attempts to smuggle contraband prejudices through the *douane*, but the candid author will open his “Revelation” bag and declare his bias.

“Have you anything to declare?”

Indeed I have.

I must declare my bulky bias against those who have murdered thousands of my fellow Christians, my bias in favour of beauty, and my prejudice against those who have already destroyed so much of Spain's artistic heritage from the past.

My political prejudices are easy to define. I accept the Christian tradition in favour of the economy of the farm, the village and the small town, and against

the megalopolitan civilisation of giant cities. I dislike the tendency to transform small men working on their own land or in their own business into the employees of chain stores, and I regard Communism as the final form of the servile state. I believe in the wide distribution and redistribution of private property.

I have no panaceas of my own to suggest. My political position is analogous to the artistic attitude of people who remark: "I know what I like, but I don't know if it's art." I know what I like, but I don't know if it's practical politics.

For one reason or another I have never voted, but if there were an election to-morrow I should vote with enthusiasm for the National Government, partly for the positive reason that I have been deeply impressed by Mr. Neville Chamberlain's speeches as Premier, and partly because I prefer peace to war, and I believe that if the Labour Party were in power, bellicose pacifists would already have plunged us into a continental war of ideologies.

The reader will, I hope, chalk my indiscreet revelations with a cross, and allow me to proceed on my journey, but before doing so, I must make a distinction which is often obscured in this very subjective age, the distinction between bias in the witness box and bias in learned counsel.

A jury would properly discount the evidence of a mother if her son were charged with murder, for her truthfulness as a witness would probably be affected by her bias, but no jury discounts the arguments of a

counsel because the counsel is biassed in favour of the client whom he is paid to defend.

Bias must be allowed for in estimating the value of evidence, but not in estimating the validity of arguments based on admitted facts. Arguments must be met with arguments. The jury will be influenced by the pleas of counsel and not by their bias.

To make this distinction clear I have divided this book into two parts. In the first I record my personal impressions of a journey through war-time Spain from Irun to Algeciras. During the first part of the book I shall occupy the witness box, and the jury will make allowances for my bias in favour of Nationalist Spain. In my more sanguine moments I hope that I shall make a better impression upon the jury than the witnesses who have visited the territory under the control of the Valencia Government.

In the second part of this book I leave the witness box. I have used the analogy of witness and counsel to clarify the situation, but the analogy is misleading, for I do not regard myself solely as a counsel briefed to present an *ex parte* statement, but as one who has tried to discover truth, and is attempting to write contemporary history. *Ex parte* statements are always unconvincing, and for this reason I welcome a form of controversy which I have helped to popularize, and which consists of the exchange of letters between exponents of different views. In the case of Spain I have done what I could to clarify my views by exposing them to the test of controversy. I tried to persuade

a champion of the Valencia Government to collaborate with me in a book of controversial letters, but failed as he was too busy. When I expressed my willingness to debate with any Communist nominated by the Communist Party of Great Britain I was informed that "the crimes of the German and Italian airmen . . . have taken the subject from the realm of debate into that of denunciation." I can well understand why the Communists should prefer denunciation to debate, for I do not envy the position of a Communist debator. He must either repudiate the official policy of Moscow or admit that he is the agent of a foreign power subsidizing revolutionary activities in this country. I have done my best to replace these coy antagonists by a careful study of the writings of those who support the Valencia Government. Their arguments will be analysed in these pages.

I shall not try to prove that every "Red" is an assassin, or that there are no sincere idealists supporting the Valencia Government. There are writings on both sides in this war which represent the enemy as lacking in every human quality, and it is this attitude which spoils one of the most vivid books written in support of the Valencia Government, *Behind the Spanish Barricades*, by John Langdon-Davies.

A far more effective presentment of the case for the Valencia Government will be found in a series of articles which appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* during June. The author is a fair-minded and generous hearted man who is far too well informed to represent this war as a

war between democracy and Fascism. I am grateful to the author of these articles, who has modified many of my views, and I hope that if he should chance to see this book he will recognize his influence in its pages.

May I in conclusion appeal to those of my readers who are out of sympathy with my views not to liquidate me with a label? There is no more popular label for this purpose than "Extremist." Spaniards are flattered if you describe them as uncompromising, but Englishmen pride themselves on their ability to split the difference. Many people soap themselves all over with satisfaction merely because they maintain that in this war one side is as bad as the other.

Surely the important thing about a view is not whether it is extreme, but whether it is correct. No one could have been more extreme than the mother who assured Solomon that the disputed child was her own, but was prepared to surrender it rather than divide it. The woman who accepted with alacrity the statesmanlike compromise that the difference and the baby should be split, lost her case and the baby.

Dr. Marañón, a distinguished Spanish scientist and veteran Radical, expressed an extreme view when he said, "At bottom only one thing matters; and that is that Spain, Europe and mankind should be free from a system of bloodshed, an institution of murder, the advent of which we accuse ourselves."

I accept this view not because it is extreme, but because I believe it to be true. I reject the view that

“ Every supporter of the Valencia Government is a murderer or a crook,” not because it is extreme, but because it is untrue.

I should add that I have no invincible objection to difference splitting as such. Indeed, I admire the diplomatic skill with which the British Government has steered the even course of neutrality. My Spanish friends do not realise the immense difficulties of Great Britain in this war. The overwhelming majority of our countrymen are only slightly more interested in the struggle between Burgos and Valencia than in wars between South American republics. They believe that peace should be the supreme concern of our Government, and as by-elections show, will give no support to a party whose partizanship in Spain is a menace to European peace. We are a democratic country, and the Government must naturally take into consideration the fact that Labour's only hope of a return to power is to identify the National Government with Fascism. Even though the Cabinet includes some who sympathize with the Nationalists and does not include any enthusiastic supporters of the Valencia Government, there is some reason to fear the German-Italian alliance, and good reason to cultivate friendly relations with France. The fact that France and the French Government are enthusiastic in supporting the Valencia Government with volunteers and with ammunition more than counteracts the natural sympathies of our Conservatives for Nationalist Spain. The position is extraordinarily delicate, and I am

convinced that the Government are actuated by a sincere desire to do justice to both sides. The best proof of their impartiality is the violence of the attacks to which they have been subjected by partizans of Burgos and Valencia respectively.

I should not be a whole-hearted supporter of the Nationalists if I did not believe that they were more determined to redress the just grievances of the poor than their opponents. There would have been no war had the Popular Front, which was returned to power to redress these grievances, set about this work instead of attempting to suppress opposition by a reign of terror. Fortunately our situation in England is very different. Communism at the moment is a potential rather than an actual danger. If, however, we do not counteract Communism while it is weak by persuasion and by social justice, the tragedy which has been rehearsed in Spain may be played out on English boards. We must not only outlive the Communists but out-think them, and know our case better than they know theirs, and if this be our policy we shall never need to exploit against them their weapons of violence and hate.





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## PART I



# SPANISH REHEARSAL

## CHAPTER I

### PLATFORM SCENE

**T**HE rotund little man on the Avignon platform was angry.

"Vous êtes un bandit," he insisted.

The platform waiter to whom this remark was addressed seemed a very mild bandit. And a very frightened bandit. He expostulated while two Algerians of the French colonial army looked out of the window in uncomprehending silence. They had just bought a bottle of wine from the platform waiter, and had been charged, according to my indignant friend, exactly two francs too much.

"Vous êtes un bandit. . . . Faut pas tricher les étrangers. Ils ne reviendront plus en France. Ce n'est pas chic de tricher les militaires. Que voulez vous ? Ils travaillent dix jours pour gagner une bouteille de vin. . . ."

The platform waiter screamed in unavailing protest. He had not cheated them. Look you, this bunch of bananas. It is these which he is selling in addition to the wine, and the price asked was not only for the wine but the bananas.

He brandished the bananas, but the Algerians made no effort to accept them.

"Voyez, ils ne veulent pas de vos bananes. Je dis que vous êtes un bandit."

The platform waiter tried another line. The neighbouring carriage was full of wounded from the Spanish Front. During the World Ski Championship at Chamonix in February 1937 I met a surgeon who had just been operating on Spanish soldiers who had been sent to France for treatment. There was a shortage of doctors in Red Spain since many had been massacred in the Red Terror. The station waiter explained tearfully that he had given coffee for nothing to a Spanish wounded.

But the rotund Jeremiah of Avignon was not mollified. He insisted that one could not cheat soldiers who were not wounded merely because one had given coffee to those that were.

"Ce n'est pas chic de tricher les militaires. Je dis que vous êtes tout de même un bandit."

The train moved off, and I invited my angry little friend to have a drink with me in the station buffet. He told me that he was a *patron* of a small shop at Pau. He was an ardent believer in Blum.

"Il n'y a plus de patrons en France, seulement des collaborateurs."

Of course the selfish *patrons* were angry with the turn things had taken, but he welcomed the change. He had always paid his workmen during their holidays, and now everybody had to. and those who did these things under compulsion were angry, but he did not see why workmen should not be paid during their holidays. . . .

My heart warmed to that little man. Generous

deeds are as rare in this world as generous sentiments are common. I have met so many people who have taken up philanthropy as a career, and who are ready to exploit the sufferings of the poor as an avenue to political power. My friend from Pau had at least paid his workmen during their holidays before being forced to do so by the Government, and he was an enthusiastic supporter of a Government which is not over-friendly to *patrons*. I thought of a famous letter from Rousseau to a correspondent who had poured out pages of invective against the rich. Rousseau replied that no man has any right to attack the rich until he himself is so prudent and thrifty as to have no need of wealth. If there were more *patrons* like my indignant friend, there would be far fewer Communists.

## CHAPTER II

### FROM IRUN TO BURGOS

I HAD to change twice between Avignon and Biarritz, and I was grateful for the leisurely pace of the train which carried us through the foothills of the Pyrenees. The green foreground was flecked with flowers, the hills deep in winter snow. Near Pau I caught a fleeting glimpse of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau on which many years ago Claude Elliott and I spent grim hours searching for the body of a friend.

I slept that night at Biarritz and took the train next morning to Hendaye. My fellow-travellers were not encouraging. I was informed that new and severe restrictions had been put into force, and that it would be very difficult to cross the frontier. My informant added that these restrictions only applied, in practice at least, to those who were crossing the frontier into Nationalist Spain.

At Hendaye my passport was examined, and I was told to go back to Bayonne and to obtain from the British Consul a statement corroborating my claim to be a British Press Correspondent. This was depressing. Throughout my journey to Spain I had been haunted by an unreasonable fear that I should never cross the frontier. I had my plans for getting into Spain, but fortunately no desperate measures were required.

At four o'clock on the afternoon of March 13th I



crossed the famous bridge at Hendaye and found myself on the outskirts of Irun.

During my drive through Irun I was surprised to see how many houses were undamaged, for Irun, according to reports, had been totally destroyed. But the total destruction of a town takes time and a great deal more ammunition than was at the disposal of either army at the beginning of this war, and though the Red incendiaries made heroic efforts to supplement the artillery, their work was often cut short by precipitous retreats. The church near the station at Irun was undamaged, as it had been defended by the Basques against the Anarchists who wished to destroy it.

From Irun I took the train to Burgos, and arrived shortly before midnight.

There was a station bus at Burgos into which my fellow-travellers and I ascended. I asked the driver to stop at the Hotel Victoria. Somebody had told me that there was a good hotel of this name at Burgos, and he may well have been right, but the driver never found it. He deposited me in front of a gloomy building which reminded me of decayed *appartements* in a small French town. I climbed up stone stairs to the first floor which was occupied by a dentist, to the second floor on which a brass plate announced "Pension Majestic Palace," and then on the third floor I discovered the *Pension* Victoria. I opened the door and met the proprietor in shirt sleeves. He waved eloquent arms and shouted "*Completo*." His wife made expansive gestures to prove that every chair and sofa had been let. This was discouraging, but what was far more depressing was my discovery that the bus driver had handed me in the dark an excellent suitcase but not my own.

I looked at this bag with sick disgust, and realised that my only hope of recovering my own suitcase was to wait until its indignant owner arrived, if ever. I hoped that he would dislike my bag as cordially as I detested his.

I sat down in the passage on the bag which did not belong to me, and the innkeeper fetched his daughter, a captain in the artillery, and a junior lieutenant in the infantry, all of whom explained not once but several times that the hotel was *completo*.

At that time I knew even less Spanish than I do to-day. In a mixture of Italian and French I did my best to explain my melancholy dilemma. Without success. The innkeeper knocked up a guest alleged to be an accomplished linguist, a veritable master of the English tongue. He appeared a few seconds later in a dressing gown.

"The pension finds itself completo. No mus sleepy here."

He reinforced this statement by bending his head to the side, pillowing it in his hands, and violently blinking his eyes to indicate sleep. He did this several times, and the effect produced was not one of quiet slumber but of agitated nightmare.

"Señor mus absent himself. Señor comprehend?"

Señor comprehended all right, but he wasn't going to absent himself until his own bag returned, so he sat with his head bowed in grief while the household chorussed "*Completo*" and the interpreter reiterated the fact that the senor no mus couch himself in this location.

A door opened, and suddenly I heard an angry splutter coming up the stairs, a splutter which increased in volume as the indignant owner of the bag which

I had taken approached our floor. He burst in upon us, and the momentary relief on his face as he caught sight of the bag vanished far too rapidly. He seized the bag and he did not say, "Thank you." And yet Spaniards are supposed to be a courteous race. He said all sorts of things which I did not understand but which I did not ask the interpreter to translate. When he discovered that I could not follow his theme, he put the bag down upon the floor so as to free both of his hands in order that speech might be supplemented by gesture. Even if I had been able to reply in Spanish I should have remained silent, for I have learned something in my long career as a conversationalist, and the happiness of re-establishing contact with my beloved "Revelation" helped me to endure the indictment of this very angry man.

By this time the proprietor of the *Pension Victoria* had abandoned all hope of getting rid of me unless he did something about finding me a room. He took me up three flights of stairs to the top floor where there were two rooms inhabited by an employee of the hotel and his wife and family. The heads of the household having very agreeably vacated their bed, they left me in undisputed possession of a room which was hardly larger than an alcove, but which was scrupulously clean.

Next morning I managed to find a hotel the name of which I most ungratefully forget, since it was reasonably comfortable and I had no complaint of the room in which I spent two nights, or of the lounge in which I spent my last night in Burgos.

Burgos is the seat of the Nationalist Government, and the overcrowded hotel was a microcosm of Nationalist Spain. Among its guests were regular

officers, Carlists, Phalangists, soldiers back on leave from the front, refugees from Red Spain, an Irish priest on his way to the Irish Brigade to which he had been appointed chaplain, and sad little groups of men and women who had no news of husbands, fathers, sons or daughters in Madrid, in Barcelona and in other towns under the control of the Madrid Government.

## CHAPTER III

### *CARA AL SOL*

**B**URGOS has left a mark on memory that the years will never efface. As I write I see the crowds pouring into the cathedral, the side chapels crowded for week-day Mass, and the boyish figures in khaki like those who were young in 1914 and are still young in our thoughts.

I see the women praying for the deliverance of Spain before the tomb of Cid Campeador. I hear in the Rosary responses that note of imploring sincerity which one seldom hears save in moments of national peril.

I see the soldiers passing through the streets, the note of gay colour in the Phalangist crests and the red bérêts of the Carlists, and I hear the song of troops on the march, "Up, squadrons, and let us conquer, for the dawn is breaking. . . ." *Cara al sol. . . .* "facing the sun."

Many years ago I shivered through the long night on a glacier ledge. We had no food and no drink and never did the stars march more slowly through the roof of heaven. We sat with our eyes to the east, and then suddenly a crystal point burned on a mountain ridge, and the point expanded into a rim of fire and the rim grew until the full circle of the sun soared above the mountain barrier and flooded our frozen bodies with renascent warmth. *Cara al sol. . . .*

And when Mola spoke on the balcony at Burgos, Spain knew that the black night of fear was past.

They had been waiting for this, the Basques of Navarre. Rumour had travelled on mountain winds, and men stood to attention waiting for the word of deliverance, the word which should summon all that is best in Spain to destroy the evil thing.

And when Mola appealed for volunteers, dukes and factory hands, tradesmen and peasants, stormed the recruiting offices as Englishmen had stormed them in 1914. Those who remember the cheering crowds round Buckingham Palace when England went to war can picture Burgos in July 1936. But the analogy is incomplete, for we entered that war without hate; there had been no Prussian terror in the streets of London. The England of 1914 was passing from prosperous peace into the valley of the shadow. The Burgos of July 1936 was escaping from darkness into light. *Cara al sol.* They had lived for months, these men who were to restore Christian Spain, under a reign of anarchy. They had seen the police stand by under instructions from the Government not to interfere while churches burned and gangsters looted. And they had risen, as every decent Englishman will rise if the Red Terror crosses the English Channel.

The mood of ardent enthusiasm had passed. The streets were full of rumours, rumours of a serious check before Madrid. The Burgos which I saw was like London in 1915, grimly determined to see the thing through—no facile optimism, no discounting of the difficulties that confronted them, but a rock-like confidence in the certainty of victory final and complete. There will be no "Lansdowne Letter" in this war.

Burgos is the seat of Government, an appropriate

setting, for it was in Burgos that the first democratic Parliament met. In the Cortes of Burgos in 1169 the *Estado Llano* (Third Estate) were represented for the first time in history, many years before the Commons were represented in the English Parliament.

I met at Burgos a lady who was working with the Anglo-Spanish medical unit at Vittoria. She spoke enthusiastically of Miss Gabriel Herbert who has been with the unit from the first. With the exception of this unit, and those equipped by the Universe Fund, British ambulances have been sent exclusively to Red Spain.

Two young Englishmen who had spent some weeks in Spain, Lord St. Aldwyn and Mr. Balfour, dined with me at Burgos. We grumbled about the indifference of our countrymen to the issues of this war, and we agreed that if only the English who have lived and worked in Spain could be mobilized to go from town to town in our country telling the truth on public platforms, England might yet be persuaded that Spain is fighting our battle no less than hers.

Meanwhile England has been doped by propaganda as corrupt as it is brilliant, as cynical as it is successful. The resources behind this propaganda are unlimited, for Russia is the second greatest gold producing country in the world and the Valencia Government has control of the gold in the Madrid Banks, while the committee of Englishmen who are trying to counteract Red propaganda have to argue for hours as to whether they can afford to print, or must be content to roneograph, a letter or pamphlet contradicting Red lies.

The new propaganda in which the Communists are supremely successful is not a propaganda based on argument. On a debating platform, as I know, the champions of Red Spain make no attempt to meet a

single point that their opponent makes ; they just rant. Their propaganda depends partly on actual photographs and partly on word pictures. The Valencia Government floods England with illustrated magazines. They are very clever, these photographs of women and children killed in air raids, very clever indeed. They have an immediate appeal to those who feel strongly but seldom think accurately. It is easy to feel strongly when you see a photograph of a child killed by a bomb, but you have not only to feel but to think to understand the distinction between the inevitable casualties among civilians in modern warfare and the deliberate massacre of men, women and children which has taken place behind the Red lines. One corpse looks much like another, and you cannot photograph the state of mind which soaks women in petrol as a preliminary to burning them alive.

The prophets of dialectical Materialism have discovered that dialectics are not enough. The written propaganda of the Reds relies not on facts but on word pictures, for the Reds are too clever to defend a hopeless case, and are wise to concentrate on word pictures imposed by the hypnotic effect of endless reiteration. Men, particularly Englishmen, are moved by pictures and bored by argument, and the picture which the Reds have imposed is a picture of reactionary generals surrounded by obsequious priests and supported by a handful of Grandees and by legions of Italian and German mercenaries.

This caricature cannot be effaced by the written word, but the English, though unmoved by impersonal arguments, have an intuition for personal truth, and an hour in the streets of Burgos or Seville would dispel



for ever the legend which the Reds have tried to create. If the surrealism of Red propaganda could be counteracted by the realism of inescapable fact, England would see, as I have seen, in the long columns of volunteers a cross section of national life like our own "First Hundred Thousand."

Even more successful than the propaganda mosaic of an army recruited from Moors and Italians is the picture of the rich fighting for their privileges against the poor and dispossessed. Nobody denies that there were grave social evils in Spain, but it is sometimes forgotten that this war followed five years of Republican government. Bloomsbury assured us that if only the King could be deposed the Republican dawn would herald an age of prosperity and reform. If the social evils were as black as they were painted, why did these Left Wing Governments which controlled Spain after the King left do nothing to redress them?

People forget that during the last century Spain has been mainly governed by Liberal Cabinets. Apart from eight years of dictatorships and an aggregate of about thirty years of Conservative Governments, Spain has been ruled for the last century by Liberals. The Spanish Liberal, however, is not in the least like Mr. Gladstone. The resemblance, believe me, is far from exact. There have been high-minded Liberals in Spanish politics, but they have been outnumbered by the kind of Liberal who is liberal with other people's property, and who retires with the loot when there is a change of Government. Strong words, but no stronger than those used by Lerroux, the Lloyd George of Spain, for fifty years a Radical, one of the architects of the Republic, and more than once premier of Republican Spain.

“For the nation is not the savage horde that robs, sacks, and murders on the pretext of social equality,” he writes, “nor is it the band of mere intellectuals who direct that horde and who, preferring to see the work of twenty centuries of civilization reduced to nothing, had not the courage to perish with it nor the strength of mind to shoulder the responsibilities they had incurred. Before seeking safety in flight and sure of impunity, they have robbed private treasures and pillaged the Treasury of the nation, and now leave behind them, a prey to the horrors of the battlefield and as veritable cannon fodder, the wretched herd that has to pay with its blood.”

If the Red Terror which followed the return of the Popular Front to power had occurred during the reign of reactionaries, it would have been less easy to defend. The violence of the poor is sometimes the only weapon against the avarice of the rich. But a Left Wing Government charged to redress grievances was in power, and the Opposition had pledged themselves to co-operation in this task. The gangsters of the Left, however, were less interested in social reform than in the more congenial pleasures of assassination, arson and loot.

It is the nation, not only the Army which has risen against this.

“The Army has not broken with discipline,” writes Lerroux, “it seeks to restore a discipline broken by anti-patriotic traitors and criminal anarchists; it has not risen against the law, but for the law, so that law and authority should rule, not against the people, but for the safety of the people. It is by no means a question of a military *pronunciamiento*, but of a national rising as legitimate and holy as the War of Independence in

1808. It is even more sacred, for it is not a question only of political independence, but of social and economic organization, of the protection of home, property, culture, conscience, and very life ; in a word, of a whole civilization as handed down in history.

"When the Army took up arms, it was already identified with the people ; and the people, without distinction of class or outlook, deliberately took its stand by the side of the Army."

When Englishmen foregather in Spain a note of exasperation creeps into their voices. How can people at home be so blind ? Must they wait for barricades in Bond Street before they see the Red light ? I write in the hope that the voice of England in Spain may be heard in the pages of this book. I am writing not only for those who love Spain but for those who love England. Let the reader retain every prejudice formed by that complex which Spaniards describe as "The Black Legend," Torquemada, Conquistador and Toreador, but let him not forget that if Russia wins in Spain France will be the next objective, and if France falls the Spanish war may yet be refought on English soil. The trenches round Madrid are the front line trenches of the unending war between civilization and subversive forces.

"It can't happen here." I wonder. Complacency and apathy are the breeding ground of revolution. My views are not only the result of book reading. I was in Germany just after the War when Communists were fighting for control, and I was in Berlin during the Communist upheavals of 1919. I have studied the effect of Communism in Italy and the methods of Communism in the United States and Canada. I have accumulated Communist propaganda literature, in-

cluding literature which is intended only for private circulation. And I know that the strength of Communism in England cannot be measured by the number of those who describe themselves as Communists. The danger is not immediate, but the uneasy truce will not last for ever.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE TWO ARMIES

A BRIEF sketch of the diverse elements of which the opposing armies in Spain are composed may be of use to the reader unversed in Spanish politics.

The pre-war army consisted of three parts, the Regular Army, the *Tercio* or Legion, and the Moors. The Regular Army consisted of a permanent *cadre* of officers and non-commissioned officers, and conscripts whose period of military service was one year. The *Tercio* or Legion consisted of long-service, highly paid volunteers, ninety-five per cent of whom at the outbreak of war were Spaniards. The Moors served for long periods in the Spanish Moroccan Army.

The majority of the officers followed Franco. Most of the conscripts, many of whom had only left their villages as conscripts, followed their officers. The Legion and the Moors followed Franco to a man.

The defection of the Navy was a severe blow, and might have proved fatal to Franco's plans had the Reds been less incompetent. The Air Force had few planes at the outbreak of war, and these were mostly out of date. They supported the Government almost to a man. The *Guardia Civil* was a magnificent corps with a fine tradition. Many of them are fighting for the Valencia Government, but the majority are believed to be fighting for Franco.

The civilian organizations which are now under arms in support of the Nationalist cause include first, in order of seniority, the *Tradicionalistas*, or, as they are usually known, the Carlists. The Carlists try to maintain the historic characteristics of the various regions of which Spain is composed. They hold strong views about the evils of finance-capitalism. They are Monarchists by conviction, but have an hereditary feud with the Alfonsist branch of the Bourbon dynasty.

*Accion Popular* support a broad programme of social justice, and defend what has been described as the organic conception of democracy. *Renovacion Espanola* is a section of *Accion Popular* which commands small support in the nation as a whole, but which makes a special appeal to the aristocracy, and, in contrast to the Carlists, wishes to see a member of ex-king Alfonso's family on the throne.

Finally there is the *Falange Española* (Spanish Phalanx) inaccurately described as the Fascists. The Phalangists are the extreme left of the Nationalist side.

The motto of the Carlists is "For God, king and country." The motto of the Phalangists is "For country, justice and bread." Many of them are anti-clericalists, and most of them are anti-monarchical, which explains the contrast between their motto and the Carlists'.

It is far more difficult to classify the different elements in Red Spain. As in every Spanish revolution, the control has rapidly passed into the hands of the extremists, though the moderates are retained in the Cabinet for purposes of window dressing.

Two great corporations of extremists are fighting

for control in Red Spain. The first is the *Union General de Trabajadores* (General Union of Workers), familiarly known by its initials U.G.T. The second is the *Confederacion Nacional de Trabajadores* (National Confederation of Workers), known by its initials as the C.N.T. According to Mr. John Langdon-Davies, whose book *Behind the Spanish Barricades* is a vivid description of Red Spain, "the U.G.T. believe in a socialist state, whereas the C.N.T. do not believe in any state at all; the U.G.T. follow the doctrines of Marx," and are therefore, I must insist, Communists even when they describe themselves as Socialists for tactical purposes, "while the C.N.T. follow those of Bakunin." Bakunin was an Anarchist who did not believe in a state at all. The ruling committee of the C.N.T. is the F.A.I. (*Federacion Anarquica Iberica*). The P.O.U.M. (*Parti Ouvrier d'Unification Marxiste*) represents the fanatic Trotskyites who are equally ready to shoot a Stalinite or an Anarchist.

A nice, friendly crowd.

Finally there is the question of nomenclature. I have described the supporters of Franco as "Nationalists" because their battle cry is "Viva España" and not "Viva Russa." Major Geoffrey McNeil-Moss, author of *The Epic of the Alcazar*, has given good reasons for describing those who support the Valencia Government as "the Reds." They fight in red shirts and wear red badges; they scrawl "Up the Reds" behind the loopholes which they defend and daub the hammer and sickle on the buildings which they occupy; they go into battle shouting "Long live Russia," and regard as treasonable the cry of "Long live Spain," a fact which throws some interesting light on the vexed problem of foreign interven-

tion. The Reds themselves do not regard this term as derogatory, and I do not use it in an abusive sense. Indeed, I have more respect for the fighting Reds than for the ineffective Pink politicians who have lost control of the revolution which they have provoked.



## CHAPTER V

### SALAMANCA

**I** SPENT three nights in Burgos and waited on an extra day because I had made friends with the chaplain to the Irish Brigade who held out hopes of a lift in Captain Meade's car. The car came in due course, but Captain Meade, who is adjutant to General Duffy, had filled it up with spare tyres and there was no place for me. I accordingly travelled by the night train to Salamanca.

I spent my last night at Burgos in the hotel lounge. I had some difficulty in deciding a point of etiquette. At what hour in the evening (or in the early morning) may one begin to treat a hotel lounge as a bedroom, remove one's boots and curl oneself up comfortably on the sofa? Spaniards go to bed late, but at 1.0 a.m. I decided that I was entitled to treat the other occupants of the lounge as intruders in my bedroom and to disregard them while I prepared myself for sleep.

I arrived in Salamanca in the early hours of the morning and discovered without surprise that the principal hotel, to which the taxi drove me, was full. One day I am going to re-edit Baedeker for wartime usage. It is all very well classifying hotels by their bedrooms in peace time, but the wartime traveller wants to know about hotel lounges. My hotel at Burgos, which Baedeker would rate as second class,

had exactly the right kind of sofa to accommodate a full length sleeper, but my Salamanca hotel, classified as first class by Baedeker, had no sofas at all in the lounge, only a series of entirely inadequate arm chairs. Consequently, though *de luxe*, it will sink in the guide book which I shall write one day into the category of "well spoken of."

After breakfast I went off in search of the Irish College to beg for a bed. I was received with the greatest hospitality by Dr. McCabe, the Vice-Rector, and spent two nights at the College.

The Irish College has a branch near Barcelona, and the Vice-Rector had a narrow escape on the outbreak of war. A lorry full of Anarchists passed, and one of the Anarchists saluted him with a clenched fist. The Vice-Rector naturally refused to win his safety by returning the Communist salute, but fortunately the Anarchist was a bad shot.

I shall always remember with gratitude the calm and cloistered peace of the Irish College at Salamanca. During the Napoleonic War it was occupied by French troops who removed the four panels in the lowest part of the magnificent altar piece, and to this day the Irish College is still debating whether to fill in those vacant panels or to remove them entirely. I hope they will leave them as they are.

At Salamanca I met my friend Captain Bolin, head of the Press Bureau. We had often met before at the *English Review* Luncheon Club, and it was interesting to meet again at a time when the forecasts which he had made in the early years of the Republic had been proved correct.

Bolin had a thankless task. He had to act as intermediary between the Military Command, whose job

was to win the war, and disgruntled journalists whose job was to report it.

During my journey through Spain from Irun to Algeciras, I received every possible courtesy and assistance from Captain Bolin and his colleagues, and it is certainly not their fault that the British and American public are so familiar with the rights of the Left and so ignorant of the wrongs of the Right. The restrictions of which the journalists complain are imposed by the Military Command, but it is only fair to recognize that this war presents very peculiar problems in censorship.

A Spaniard who served as a war correspondent in the Great War convinced me that General Franco's staff are far more indulgent to journalists than the French or British Generals in the Great War. This is to their credit, for they have greater temptation to remove all journalists miles from the front line. The Germans, for instance, who are trying out their new anti-aircraft guns, are peculiarly sensitive to the propinquity of French journalists, some of whom may have been suspected, and one of whom has been arrested on a charge of spying on behalf of the French. Furthermore, the controversy in connection with non-intervention made the military authorities particularly sensitive to the question of Irish and Italian volunteers.

## CHAPTER VI

### TABLE TALK AT AVILA

FROM Salamanca I proceeded by motor bus to Avila, and arrived in the evening. If this were a book on Spain rather than a book on the Spanish War I would make some effort to pay a tribute of affection and respect to Avila of the eighty-six towers. It was at Avila that I first met Captain Aguilera.<sup>1</sup> He was a retired Army officer who fought with distinction in the Moroccan War. In the present war he had been given the responsible position of superintending the movements of the Press correspondents. In the early stages he had had an exciting time following up the advancing army. On one occasion Aguilera and a French journalist had kept the Reds at bay with rifle fire until they were rescued from a perilous predicament.

Every Press Correspondent whom I met spoke in the highest terms of Aguilera. Everybody knew that his sympathies were enlisted on the side of the journalist attempting to get a story, and that he would pull what wires could be pulled on their behalf.

In the little room where the Press were waiting for the evening bulletins I saw a familiar figure who seemed, however, curiously unfamiliar. I recognized, so I thought, the face, but the red beard was puzzling.

<sup>1</sup> El Conde de Alba de Yeltes.

Randolph Churchill set my mind at rest. The beard, he explained, was a wartime hardship.

But for the beard Randolph had changed little.

"I wish you'd go back to Salamanca," he exclaimed, "and tell those damned people at the Press Office that they're losing this war by their idiotic censorship. The Reds have got them beat so far as publicity is concerned. They let the Press go where they like, and consequently the Press send back great human stories from the front, and that's what the public wants, human stories. They don't care a damn who's right or who ought to win. A few excitable Catholics and ardent Socialists think this war matters, but for the general public it's just a lot of bloody dagoes killing each other. If only we could put across some good stories we could get some sympathy for Franco. But in Salamanca they're more interested in killing stories than in killing Reds."

"Hush, Churchill," said Captain Aguilera, "here's a bulletin coming through. Big stuff, I can tell you."

The man at the telephone took down the Bulletin from the Front, and translated it briefly for the English correspondents.

"Army of the North, Fifth Division, no news."

"Division of Soria. An attack on our position has been repulsed with great losses to the enemy."

"Army of the South. Six members of the Red Militia have surrendered with their arms."

"Army of Madrid, nothing new to report."

"There you are, gentlemen," exclaimed Aguilera, "there's romance for you. That's the big story for which Randolph has been clamouring. Use your brains, and make England ring with these dramatic

deeds. Don't forget that six militia men have surrendered with all their arms."

Randolph's outspoken criticism of the Press arrangements provoked mixed feelings among his colleagues. Some of them complained that he was exploiting his name and the goodwill of the *Daily Mail* to say what he pleased, and that he knew very well that Franco would be reluctant to expel a journalist who was the son of Winston Churchill and the representative of almost the only great daily paper which has been consistently friendly to the Nationalist cause. Randolph, on the other hand, maintained that precisely because it would be difficult to expel him, he was in a stronger position than they to voice grievances which they felt no less than he.

The first reactions of the Spanish officials with whom Randolph came into contact were unfavourable, but Randolph improves on acquaintance.

"I like that boy," said Aguilera. "I was dead against him coming here, because I knew that we couldn't kick him out if he was a nuisance; but he grows on one, and I like his great reverence for his father."

Aguilera, Randolph and I dined with an American journalist, Charles Foltz, and a representative of the French Press and his wife. Randolph held forth on the iniquitous treatment to which a French journalist had been subjected. He had been in prison for some weeks, and, so Randolph said, no charge had been preferred against him. Why was nothing done?

Foltz hinted that neither his French colleagues nor he were convinced that the Frenchman was innocent. One of the complications of this war is the fact that Franco has to take into consideration the susceptibilities of his allies. To the German, as I have already said,

every French journalist is suspect as a possible spy entrusted with the duty of reporting on the German anti-aircraft equipment.

"Well, supposing I was arrested," said Randolph, "and thrown into prison. What would you do, Foltz?"

"The Press Correspondents here would go to Salamanca," replied Foltz, "and unless they were satisfied that there was some substance in the charge against you, they would leave Spain."

"I wonder whether you would," said Randolph.

"There's only one thing that might stop us," said Foltz. "After all, you've been pretty free with your criticisms of the authorities here, and it's possible that some of us might think that you've been asking for trouble."

"Perhaps I'm not a fair case," said Randolph. "Well, let's take another case, your American colleague at Talavera. Would you take action if he was arrested?"

"Sure I would," said Foltz. "He's a rival of mine. I'd do for him what he'd do for me, and what puzzles me about the Frenchman in prison at Avila is that none of his French colleagues have taken any steps in the matter."

I asked the French lady on my right her views. She shrugged her shoulders and was non-committal, which convinced me, as it had indeed convinced Foltz, that the innocence of the Frenchman in prison was not quite so certain as Randolph had assumed.

The talk turned to atrocities. Randolph quoted a remark of his father's. "The most merciful side will win in this war. Grass grows on graves; it does not grow on scaffolds."

Aguilera nodded.

"You are right. We shall win. We are the most merciful. We shoot, but we do not torture."

A few minutes later Aguilera turned to me and remarked in an aside, "There is, of course, one aspect of this business which we can't expect our young friend to understand, the existence and the influence of satanic powers. But my friend, Kaid Ali Gaurri," he looked towards a Moor at the next table, "he would understand."

A few days later I met a Spaniard who would probably have agreed both with Aguilera and Kaid Ali Gaurri. He was a man of 55 who had spent a great deal of his life in England where he had been educated. He was in business when the war broke out, and suddenly found himself promoted to the presidency of a court martial appointed to try various cases of atrocities in a village which the Nationalists had captured.

In this village, Ximena de la Frontera, the local "capitalist," was a woman of forty-five, Catalina Cavilan, who owned about £5,000. She was the richest woman in the village but an ardent Communist. When the Reds were in power she hired workmen to dig up the bodies of buried nuns, and having made a collection of bones, she threw them one by one on to the fire on which the village priest, Father Marcelino Bayo, was burned alive on September 6th, 1936.

My friend who presided over the court martial told me that he started proceedings with a strong prejudice in favour of the woman. He could not believe this story, and suspected that somebody in the village was trying to pay off old scores. There have been occasions of this kind, and some Spaniards have already been shot by Franco's army for bringing false accusations of Communist terrorism against innocent men.



"I tried to help her," said my friend, "and cross-examined the witnesses for the prosecution pretty carefully. But did she help me? Not a bit. She gloried in her crime, and declared that she would do the same thing again with the greatest possible gusto. She had made something of a local reputation as a prophet of Free Love, but volunteered, rather bitterly, the information that in spite of this she died a maid. I have sometimes wondered whether her failure to escape from a state which the priest whom she had helped to burn had voluntarily embraced, may have set up an anti-clerical complex. There was nothing for it, as the villagers would have shot me if I had let her off (and rightly so). The country outside the village was the place fixed for the execution, but this woman sat down in the village street when she was being led out to execution and said, 'You lazy scum. I don't see why I should help you to execute me. You can carry me to the cemetery. I won't walk.' She died shaking a clenched fist with a cry of 'Long Live Russia!'"

During dinner Randolph Churchill defined his political credo. "The one subject on which I feel passionately," he explained, "is free speech. I think there's a case for denying free speech to Fascists and to Communists in England because it's part of their programme to deny free speech to their opponents, but I believe with passionate conviction in free speech. I'd fight cheerfully to preserve the sacred right of every Englishman to hold forth in Hyde Park and to shout 'Damn Baldwin' at the top of his voice."

"And 'Damn Churchill'?" I asked.

"Certainly. 'Damn Baldwin,' 'Damn Churchill,' 'Damn Attlee,' 'Damn them all.' As long as an Englishman can damn politicians in Hyde Park

England will remain one of the few civilized spots on this mouldy planet."

"It might be a great deal more civilized," I suggested tentatively, "if the Englishman were free not only to damn Baldwin but also to damn Selfridge, Beaverbrook or whoever happened to be his boss."

"What are you driving at?" asked Randolph.

"Only this. Mussolini is the only dictator in Italy, but there are plenty of industrial dictators in England. In Italy the workman who is sacked has the right to appeal to a Labour Court on which both workmen and employers are represented, and I am told that the majority of these appeals are decided in favour of the workman. I am sure, however, that our great industrialists would be horrified by any attempt to introduce economic democracy in England."

Nor is the problem of free speech so simple as Randolph Churchill seemed to imagine.

"Every man is entitled," said Samuel Johnson, "to utter what he pleases, and every other man is entitled to knock him down for it. Martyrdom is the test."

Our view is different. We believe that every man is entitled to utter what he pleases, and the police are there to see that nobody knocks him down for it. Martyrdom makes trouble.

Our attitude to free speech, like our attitude to everything else, is opportunist. In this, as in other matters we are guided by expediency. We do not imprison atheists because we do not think atheism matters. We imprison men who seek to sow disaffection in the army or navy because we value more highly our defences against Germany than our defences against atheism. We are not less intolerant than our ancestors, but we are intolerant about different things.

A man may say roughly what he likes in Hyde Park, but in free England he is not permitted to wear a black shirt in a procession. "Damn Baldwin" is not provocative to Earl Baldwin, but a black shirt is highly provocative to those who are working for a dictatorship of the Red Shirts. We don't mind people saying what they like about the next world because we are not sure there is a next world. We strongly discourage people for saying what they like about rich people because we are certain that there is such a thing as property.

We believe in religious toleration up to a point, but only up to a point. We imprisoned conscientious objectors in the War, and even in peace time we should not be prepared to tolerate the indiscriminate propaganda of all religions. Hinduism, in which little girls act as temple prostitutes, is a case in point. If a Hindu missionary made converts in Hyde Park, and if as a result little English girls were sent out to India to serve as temple prostitutes, the apostles of Hinduism would deservedly receive short shrift.

Meanwhile, as Randolph remarked, people are free to damn Baldwin, to damn Churchill, and to damn Attlee.

## CHAPTER VII

### TELEPATHIC MOTORING

CAPTAIN AGUILERA, in whose car I was to spend the next three days, is a retired officer. A Spaniard who knew him well told me that he had fought with outstanding gallantry in the Moroccan War in which he commanded a squadron of Moorish cavalry. The Moors do not readily follow leaders of whose personal courage they are not convinced.

Aguilera is not only a soldier but a scholar. He would have been at home in the Greek world, for the Greeks would not have understood the Bloomsbury distinction between intellectuals and Colonel Blimps. Socrates fought with distinction as a hoplite at Potidaea, and twice saved the life of Alcibiades in battle. Aeschylus fought at Marathon, and Thucydides was a naval commander who came with seven ships to the rescue at the taking of Antipolis.

"Fancy old Hallam," comments Fitzgerald, "sticking to his gun at Martello tower. This is the way to make men write well. This is the way to make literature respectable. O Alfred Tennyson, could you but have had the luck to be put to such employment."

The Greek tradition is not dead. The services are not exclusively recruited from Blimps, nor are Blimps the only people whose beliefs are determined not by a survey of the evidence but by a complex of emotional

prejudices and tribal loyalties. This atrophy of critical faculties is not unknown in Bloomsbury, but unfortunately the Right Wing have yet to produce a Low to familiarize the public with the rival charms of Professor Blimpski or the Dean of Blimpester.

I was more impressed by Aguilera's driving than by his scholarship. The Spaniard is oriental in his fatalism and in his stoic indifference to death. Nobody who has been driven for a few hundred miles by a Spanish driver would dispute these facts. We left Avila in the early morning and for the first hour on the road we met nothing coming in the opposite direction. During this hour I tried in vain to discover the Spanish rule of the road. I did not like to ask, for it seemed to me that this was a question which any intelligent man should be able to answer for himself, so I tried to guess. But as we were always on the centre of the road on the straight and invariably cornered on the inside of the curve, I did not solve this problem until we missed by inches a lorry which we fortunately met not exactly at a bend, but a few yards beyond it.

On a good open road Aguilera would slow down to sixty miles an hour before turning a corner, on bad roads he would crawl round at a miserable forty miles an hour. I am not guessing. I kept my eyes glued on his speedometer.

"Why do you *always* corner on the inside," I asked plaintively.

"Because at this speed," he replied, "we might skid into a ditch or over a precipice if we cornered on the outside."

"And why at this speed? Why not slow down?"

"Well, if you slow down, you lose ten seconds per

corner, which means ten minutes in the day, and nearly an hour in the week."

I pointed out mildly that we had been forty-five minutes late in starting that morning, and so far as I was concerned I would prefer to regard those forty-five minutes as irrevocably lost. Life is sweet, and I made one more feeble effort for its prolongation. "Why not toot? At least you might blow your horn."

"The other chap wouldn't hear it," Aguilera said grimly, "he would be coming too fast."

The French drive fast, but Aguilera told me with a chuckle that French chauffeurs near the Spanish frontier stop their cars if they hear a car coming from the south. The car may be driven by a Spaniard.

The foreign driver in Spain soon discovers that though it is advisable to observe the rule of the road in towns and on crowded highways, it is normally safest to take all turns on the extreme outside of the bend.

Two Spaniards, if they happen to meet on a bend, inevitably meet on the inside; one will be legally in the right, and both will be dead.

It would be unjust to Aguilera to imply that he never blew his horn. "I had to hoot," he remarked apologetically on one occasion, "I wanted to get the sentry out of his box."

My friend Douglas Jerrold's experiences in Spain were even more unnerving. He had a driver far less expert than Captain Aguilera and considerably rasher. So much so that on one occasion his companion, Señor Merry del Val, so far forgot himself as to murmur: "If you like, you could tell the chauffeur to go a little slower."

No Spaniard could pass on so disgraceful a message,

but the English, with their queer prejudice against sudden death, can do these things. A few minutes later the chauffeur, justly irritated by this reflection on his skill, cornered at sixty on a greasy road and recovered from an appalling skid to find the road-head all but blocked by a big cart on the top of which was a large barrel of olive oil. The barrel of olive oil shot over Jerrold's head, missing it by inches and the car went into the ditch. As they climbed out of the ditch the chauffeur remarked resentfully, "It would have been all right if it had not been for the barrel."

It is difficult on any reasonable theory of chances to explain the fact that Aguilera is still alive. Sooner or later, one would think, he would meet his opposite number on a corner, but he has not met him yet. I asked him if he could provide a clue to this problem.

"The fact is," he said gravely, "that I have a curious kind of sixth sense. Call it clairvoyance or telepathy or what you will. I just know when a car is meeting me round the next bend, and I slow up and get to the other side of the road."

A terrifying remark.

On my return to England I sent him an edited copy of *You Have Been Warned*, with a contribution of my own to the famous series of "Last Words" :

"I can sense a car by clairvoyance."

Franco's confidence in the clairvoyance of Spanish drivers would appear to have been shaken, for I read in Salamanca a public notice, signed by Franco, drawing attention to the ever-increasing number of motor accidents behind the line.

The thrill of Spanish motoring tends to blunt the edge of minor excitements incidental to travel near the front line. In this war the front is ill-defined, and

more than one party has strayed into enemy lines with tragic results for the Spanish occupants of the straying car.

I remember emerging from a little village near the line to discover a signpost obligingly labelled "*Al enemigo*." Aguilera reversed, and the back wheels stuck in the ditch.

"We'd better get out of this quick," said Aguilera, "if we don't want to test the accuracy of a machine-gun barrage."

"Don't hurry on my account," I remarked. "This is the only really peaceful moment of the day."

There is, moreover, something infectious about Spanish fatalism. I have often been frightened where there was no risk of being killed, and little risk of serious injury. There is a famous slope at Mürren called "Lone Tree" which it is the ambition of every skier to take straight. On the rare occasions when I have pointed my skis down that slope, my knees have been as wax. But Aguilera's skill, if not his clairvoyance, enabled me to enjoy those days in his car with hardly an uneasy moment.

The contrast between my composure in his car, where the risk was not inconsiderable, and my discomposure on "Lone Tree" slope, is humiliating, for it is yet another illustration of the melancholy fact that our reactions are influenced far more strongly by emotion than by reason. None the less there was a rational basis for my confidence in Aguilera.

Before we parted I had almost begun to believe in his telepathic claims, for more than once he slowed up and moved over to the right side of the road just in time to avoid a collision with a car round a bend which he might have sensed but could not have seen.



And there were more rational grounds for my faith, for his skill was uncanny. I remember one occasion when his clairvoyant talent was not functioning. We were whizzing down a mountain road with a sharp drop to our left. We had cornered, on the wrong side as usual, and as we came round the corner we met a vast lorry. This failed to disconcert Aguilera who swept out of its way with his usual adroitness. He was, however, taken completely by surprise by a big trailer attached to the lorry which swung out as the lorry passed us, and almost forced us over the edge of the mountain road.

Einstein alone could explain how Aguilera contrived to render ridiculous the laws of normal time and space and to thread a swift, decisive and breath-taking course between the swinging trailer and the mountain slope below. So it would seem that telepathy must be reinforced by relativity to explain the continued survival of Aguilera and other Spanish drivers.

In Spain it is bad form to register by thought, word or deed, the slightest bias in favour of continuing to exist. Douglas Jerrold, during his visit to the front, had to cross a road exposed to enemy fire. The Spaniards sauntered across, and Jerrold, for very shame, had to content himself with a smart amble.

I have often, in the Alps, crossed gullies liable to be swept by falling stones, and I have always crossed them as rapidly as possible. In the Alps a man who exposed himself unnecessarily to falling stones would be written down as an ass. Our attitude to danger is largely determined by convention, and I must confess that the Alpine convention seems to me far more rational than the Spanish.

I agree with the view expressed by a friend of mine whose work as a university teacher brings him into contact with the young. "All the better type of undergraduate," he said to me, "need an outlet for adventure either in the air, the mountains, or the sea."

It is, however, one thing to prefer a dangerous sport to the security of mere games, and quite another matter to pretend that one would just as soon be hit by falling stones or bullets as not. The art of war consists in killing, and not in being killed. A good soldier does not expose himself unnecessarily to risks without some compensating advantage to his side. Mountaineering has its dangers; one is justified in attempting a dangerous mountain provided he does his best to reduce avoidable risks to a minimum.

Now as a Rationalist, I can understand that the risks of dangerous driving are a small price to pay for the thrill of cornering at sixty miles an hour, but I find it less easy to understand the stoic acceptance of these risks by Spanish passengers who get none of the fun of "dominating matter, and mastering it, and forcing it to do one's will."

The quotation is from Aguilera, and the remark was made after missing a lorry by inches.

I didn't mind Aguilera dominating inanimate matter, but it wasn't quite clear to me what fun the animate matter beside him in the car was getting out of this particular sport. Aguilera has done a little ski-ing, and I have invited him to join me in Mürren after the war.

I should like to enter him for the Scaramanga Cup, a race in which two skiers are roped together. In bygone days I won this cup, and even to-day I think

I could make Aguilera, a novice on skis, pretty miserable if he were tied to me at the other end of the rope. It would be my turn to talk about the joy of dominating matter, but I doubt if his Spanish pride would ever allow him to murmur "Go slow."

## CHAPTER VIII

### BEHIND THE LINES

**I** SHALL never forget three memorable days that I spent with Aguilera near the front. On the first of these days we left Avila in the early morning and drove towards the snow dusted Sierra de Gredos.

I have spent many years of my life among the mountain ranges of many lands, and my mind instinctively searches rather for resemblance than for points of contrast in its first reactions towards new hills, but in Spain it was the point of contrast rather than the point of resemblance which impressed me.

The vertical is the keynote of Alpine majesty, but among the mountains of central Spain the driving sweep of rounded slopes serves as a foil to emphasize long vistas of roads which march with the precision of the Roman legions across the plains which Rome conquered to the hills which the Romans crossed.

We stopped the car on the summit of our first pass.

Never have I seen a hillscape richer in contrasts both of light and colour. Clouds sometimes divide vertically as a curtain divides, and sometimes horizontally, the movement beginning from below as when a blind is rolled up, so that you feel as if you were looking out from a darkened room through a narrow slit on to the sunlit space beyond.

And it was some such effects as this that we saw from

our pass. Nothing could have been more invincibly concrete than the black screen of cloud which was slowly lifting itself from the earth ; nothing more unsubstantial than the immensities of sky which gleamed below the ragged horizontal rim of rain blackened mist, a sky in which placid pools of unfathomable blue showed through the dispute of storm and sun.

There was every contrast that the eye could demand. Gleaming mountain crests where sulky winter still refused the gracious advances of the spring, rose out of the middle slopes snow-dusted but dark. Sunrays slanting through mists foiled their shadow with silver. The intangible green of the plains seemed transparent against the opaque browns of frost-killed grass on the hills just released from the snow. Nor were the contrasts confined to colour and light, for the silence of the hills was shot with incipient music, the first whispering streams to which the sun had restored their vocation of sound.

“The Reds,” said Aguilera, as we resumed our journey, “are always ranting about the illiteracy in Spain, but if they’d spend a few months living among the mountains they might begin to understand that the people who can’t read are often wiser than the people who can. Wisdom isn’t the same thing as education. I have got shepherds on my farms who are immensely wise, perhaps because they read the stars and the fields and perhaps because they don’t read newspapers. They have time to think about ultimate things. The long distances of our Spanish hills breed philosophers.”

A verse from Isaiah came back to me. “Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty. They shall behold a land of far distances.”

Our first objective was Robledo, a little village near the front. Aguilera's son was fighting among the mountains just above the village. We stopped for a few minutes at the battalion headquarters, and a telephone message was sent to the front line to inform Aguilera's son of his arrival. As we climbed back into the car Aguilera remarked, "We'll have to hurry over the next bit as we are within range of the machine-guns."

Aguilera's idea of "hurrying" is more alarming than the risk of a spent bullet. Fortunately the gradient was steep, and our security was therefore increased by the extra time which we spent in the alleged danger area. After parking the car just under the protection of the station wall, we wandered off for a stroll.

Seldom have I known a more perfect spring morning among the hills. Even winter's shroud of snow on the crests bore witness to the resurrection of colour, for the snow into which the sun was insinuating colour and light was not dead like the snows of January but pregnant with the life of spring.

It was impossible to believe that there were trenches on the crest of the hilltops just above. War and death had never seemed more remote. But the war came down to us from the mountains in the form of a handsome young Franco-Norman in a muddy trench coat. The troops, so he told us, had suffered terribly from the cold. Two men had just deserted not, so their friends believed, because they had Red sympathies, but because they were almost dead with cold, and could not resist the lure of shelter.

Aguilera said good-bye to his son and climbed back into the car.

"There's all the difference in the world," said

Aguilera, "between a civil war and an ordinary war. One of the difficulties of civil war is that both armies contain a proportion of men whose sympathies are on the other side. Fortunately I don't think we've many Reds in our own front lines, and those we have fight like the rest. The Spaniard is such a born fighter that if you put him into a trench he will fight even if he wants the other side to win. The moment they start to attack, he gets angry. 'Damn it,' he says, 'these fellows think they can drive me out of this trench, but by God, I'll show them.' "

Heroic deeds have been performed in this war by those who have been forced to fight against their friends. There is, for instance, the story of the officer who was in Madrid when the war started. He was sent to Toledo and put in charge of a big gun with instructions to shell the centre of the Alcazar. None of his shells fell where they should. Usually they missed the Alcazar altogether, and when they registered a hit it was always on some unimportant point.

The artillery officer was shot by the Reds. He died happy in the thought that he had done them more disservice by fighting in their ranks than by refusing to fight. A true hero, for he was risking something dearer to a Spaniard than life—his honour, for he had no reason to hope that his friends would ever know why he was serving with the Government troops.

Most of the Reds escape with the Red forces as Franco advances. Those of us who have visited Nationalist Spain have been impressed by the friendliness of the population. I remember only one incident which suggested hostility. A young man deliberately waited in the middle of the road and ignored one of the

few toots which Aguilera produced from his horn during our journey. He jumped for safety when he discovered that Aguilera was prepared to humour him if he was anxious to be run over.

"A fellow did that to me the other day," said Aguilera. "He waited just too long, but luckily for him my brakes are good. While he was recovering from the shock of being missed by inches, I jumped out, seized him by the scruff of the neck and bundled him into the car. The village was near the top of the mountain pass, and I drove him downhill for eight miles while he whimpered beside me. I then turned him out of the car, and left him to walk home. I bet he sweated before he got there. That chap was a typical Iberian. You know your *Don Quixote*, don't you? Well, Quixote is the conquering Franco-Norman type, tall, fair, blue eyes, and so on. Sancho Panza, on the other hand, is a sturdy, thick-set Iberian. There was nothing wrong with the Sancho Panzas until the Reds got hold of them, but of course they'll never produce leaders."

Perhaps not, and yet the undisputed rule of the Franco-Norman stock is a thing of the past in Spain. If Franco wins Sancho Panza is going to have his share in running the country, but God help him if Moscow wins.

We lunched in a little village above the valley of the Tagus. A group of women in the street started talking to Aguilera as he filled up with petrol, and this is the story that they told him.

Before the Nationalists arrived, and when the Reds were in control, the village Reds had massacred every man in the village who was not in sympathy with their views. When the Reds retreated from the



village those responsible for this massacre left with them. Their wives accompanied them and were subsequently billeted in an outlying part of the University City of Madrid. When this part of the city fell into Franco's hands, these women were asked where they came from, and plans were made to repatriate them. They screamed their terrified protests. "If you send us back home we shall be murdered." They were right. Those women whose husbands had been murdered were waiting for the wives of their assassins to return.

One does not need to spend many weeks in Nationalist Spain to marvel not that there have been reprisals but that Franco has been so successful in keeping these reprisals within limits and in substituting courts martial for lynch law.

"It is the melancholy duty of our generation," said Aguilera, "to act as the ministers of exemplary justice. We can only save Spain from a repetition of these horrors if we impress upon the minds of those of this generation a fact of supreme importance, the fact that there is a God in heaven and justice on earth."

"Have you ever noticed," said Aguilera as we resumed our journey, "that England has always been on the side of revolution? You backed revolution in Spain, in Greece, in Hungary, in Italy and in the South American Republics. Even in the case of France the Whigs and the intellectuals sympathized with subversive forces."

Broadly speaking Aguilera was right. Wordsworth wrote one of his finest sonnets to a mulatto revolutionary who distinguished himself during his brief period of power in Hayti by brutalities as horrible as

those of Red Spain. And it was to this scoundrel, Toussaint l'Ouverture, that Wordsworth wrote :

There's not a breathing of the common wind  
That will forget thee ; thou has great allies ;  
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,  
And love, and Man's unconquerable mind.

Selfishness and corruption in high places are the causes of most revolutions, and those who rebel under the provocation of just grievances have a right to count on the sympathy of generous hearted men. Unfortunately those who are concerned merely to substitute themselves for other tyrants and to destroy all that is noble in Christian civilization, find it easy to exploit for their own evil ends the just indignation of the poor and the sympathy of Wordsworth, Shelley and Byron.

"Yes," said Aguilera, "the enemies of our European civilization have always found and are still finding their strongest allies in your country. Isn't it odd that we still like English people as individuals? "We detest your policy, hate your smugness and your determination to treat as a joke the character which you have so justly earned, *perfidie Albion*, but we still like Englishmen.

"And because we like you," added Aguilera, "we try not to be unduly irritated by your ignorance of Europe, your provincialism and your complacency."

A few weeks later I met a Spanish diplomat who suggested that the strength of England was principally due to our immense complacency. "I remember," he continued, "a British ambassador remarking to me at a state ball under the Monarchy, that he did not think that they could have put up a better show in London. That made the evening for me."

In the matter of pride the Englishman has, as my diplomatic friend pointed out, one immense advantage over the rest of the world. He is intensely proud of his country, and so is the Spaniard. The untravelled Englishman despises the Spaniard, and the untravelled Spaniard despises the Englishman. But whereas the Englishman believes that he is the object of envy to the Spaniard, the Spaniard knows that he is not the object of envy to the Englishman. It is there that the Englishman scores. Our complacency is unaffected by the slightest suspicion that other people are equally complacent about their own countries.

There is nothing new in the self-confidence of the English. "The English are great lovers of themselves," wrote a shrewd Venetian ambassador in 1498, "and of everything belonging to them; they think there are no other men than themselves and no other world but England: and whenever they see a handsome foreigner, they say that he 'looks like an Englishman' and that 'it is a great pity that he should not be an Englishman,' and when they partake of any delicacy with a foreigner, they ask him 'whether such a thing is made in their country?' and they would sooner give five or six ducats to provide an entertainment for a person than a groat to assist him in any distress. . . . Of the English few, except the clergy, are addicted to the study of letters."

Aguilera made some remark about the Anglican deans who had just returned from their visit to Madrid. I tried to turn the conversation, for as an Englishman I felt ashamed of this deputation. I remembered that though England may, as Aguilera insists, have invariably sympathized with revolution on the Continent, the England of to-day compares in one

respect very badly with the England of the eighteenth century. The Whigs sympathized with the French Revolutionaries, but the persecution of the French priesthood in France provoked widespread sympathy in Protestant England. England was then as anti-Catholic as England is to-day, but no Anglican deans travelled round France at the expense of Robespierre. No less than 8000 French priests sought the hospitality of Protestant England, and did not seek in vain. The King's house at Winchester gave shelter to 1000 priests, and for many years a large sum of money was voted for their relief by Parliament and supplemented by voluntary subscription.

We passed a group of Moors.

"The Moors," said Aguilera, "have a natural kinship with the Spaniard, for there is a good deal of Moorish blood in Spain, and we are both products of a fighting stock. We are proud to fight side by side with them, and they are proud to fight with us. After the Moroccan War we sent soldiers to govern them, and had no trouble until the Spanish Republic started sending politicians. If that had lasted we should have lost Morocco. By the way," he added, "I wish you'd tell me why it was right for the English and French to fight side by side with Sikhs, Pathans and Senegalese in the European War, and wrong for the Spaniards to fight side by side with the Moors?"

I don't know the answer to this question.

Nor apparently do those who heckle me on this subject when I lecture on Spain either in this country or in the States. Communists who are so disedified by the alliance between Spaniards and Moors, are eloquent on the iniquity of the colour bar in America. Moscow, indeed, is seeking to persuade the American

negro that Communism is the enemy of all racial distinctions. Nobody is more anxious than the American Communist to break down the barriers of marriage between the negroes and the whites.

"How can you pretend," I have often been asked, "that Franco is fighting for Christian civilization when he has enlisted the support of non-Christian Moors?"

A foolish question. A vicar whose church was on fire would not insist that the fire brigade should be composed exclusively of devout Christians. Many Christians, unfortunately, are ready to work in alliance with Atheistic Communists in spite of the fundamental disagreement about first principles. Why should not the Spanish Catholic and the Moor, both of whom believe in God, fight side by side against militant Atheism?

From the Moors the talk turned by a natural transition to the Moroccan War, and Aguilera recalled some of his own memories of that campaign. "It's an illusion to suppose," he said, "that professional soldiers are anxious for war. There's hardly a man on either side in this war who isn't longing for peace. None the less, war has its good side. There is something very exhilarating in those moments when you have counted your life as lost and never expect to see the sun set. It is the reaction after the fight rather than the fight which is the real reward of the soldier. If for hour after hour you have seen men fall at your side and yet emerge against all hope unscathed, you experience an ecstatic exultation. We call it *allegria del supervivente*, the joy of the survivor."

At that moment we met a car round a corner and Aguilera performed his usual miracle, and I was glad

to feel that even miserable civilians have their moments of ecstasy, moments when they too experience the *allegria del superviviente*.

Meanwhile we were nearing our journey's end, and the weather again was changing for the worse. The hill crests on our right were enmeshed in ragged rims of thunder cloud.

The last five miles of the road into Talavera run beside the river, and on the other side of the river were low lying hills held by the Reds. One of the peculiarities of this war is the contempt with which the enemy is treated. In Flanders and in France a road running exactly parallel with the enemy lines at an average distance of a mile or two was seldom crowded, at least by day, but in Spain everybody acts on the assumption that he won't be shelled until he is. Even so it is difficult to understand the failure of the Reds to cut this main road from Merida to Madrid, the principal channel for all supplies and reinforcements. Talavera is a key point, and yet apart from the river, has no effective defence. I spent three nights in Talavera, and seldom saw any soldiers in the streets. For all practical purposes Talavera was an open town. It has been several times bombarded from the air, but it has only once been seriously attacked. The story is worth telling.

At that time an air squadron, since moved, was stationed near Talavera. Its commander observed on his own aerial reconnaissances that big guns were being massed behind a hill just across the river. He was insistent in his warnings to G.H.Q., and assured them that an attack was imminent, but his warnings were ignored. Then one morning the Red aeroplanes came over just as the squadron were at breakfast. They dived into their dugouts, but their commandant

was sufficiently alert to note that the explosions suddenly changed in quality. The aerial bombardment was giving place to an artillery bombardment in preparation for infantry attack. He leapt out of his dug-out, and bundled his officers into their planes. They took off from the aerodrome under heavy shell fire just as three battalions of Reds came across the river, and bombed those Reds and machine-gunned them until they broke and fled. This is perhaps the only occasion in which a big infantry attack has been successfully beaten off by aeroplanes alone.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE MADRID FRONT

ON retiring from the Army Aguilera had devoted himself to research, and he had just completed revising the manuscript of a long treatise on Spanish Legislation and its influence on Spanish History when the war broke out.

"I had three thousand books in my library in Madrid," he said, "but they have all been destroyed, so I am told. I buy books to use them, and every one of those books was marked and annotated."

On the theme of his vanished library Aguilera was far from taciturn, and he recurred to this subject more than once in the days we spent together, but he volunteered no information about his relations in Madrid save in reply to a definite question.

"Yes, my mother's in Madrid. She's Scottish—born a Munro—and she regained her British nationality after my father died."

"Why doesn't she leave Madrid?"

"Oh, she's staying on to protect my sister and her children."

"Is your sister's husband still alive?"

"I don't know. He was on the General Staff. It's dangerous to try to get news. I expect he's been bumped off."

He said no more. Spaniards seldom speak of their



relations behind the Red lines, for they would lose their sanity if they allowed their minds to dwell on these things.

Rain fell during our drive to Madrid, and we could see little more than the outline of the city from the Casa del Campo. Just behind the lines there is a house with an observation tower that commands, in fine weather, a magnificent panorama of Madrid. From this tower we could see (and be seen from) a tower about a mile and a half nearer Madrid, which was in possession of the Reds.

"If it was fine," said Aguilera, "we should have to be careful. When the Reds see people moving about on this roof they assume that they are artillery officers and start shelling the house. There's the butt end of a 'seventy-five stuck in that wall. That's new since my last visit."

It was easy to understand why the Reds should shell our vantage post, less easy to understand why the house was still standing. In Flanders so ideal an observation tower within a mile of the front would not have survived for twenty-four hours, but in Flanders there was ammunition to squander, whereas in this war both sides have been severely rationed.

Toledo, which we visited next day, is just behind the front. Towns similarly situated in France and Flanders were uninhabitable, but the good folk of Toledo went about their business as in peace time. A spent bullet sometimes found its way into the open square in front of the Alcazar, but there was little else, save the crackle of desultory firing, to remind us that the Reds were on the other side of the Tagus.

It is only an occasional village such as Pozuelo, the scene of fierce fighting, where there has been destruction

comparable to that which was general on the Western Front. In Pozuelo, which we visited just after leaving Madrid, one had to pick one's way with care.

"Don't touch that," said Aguilera, pointing to an unexploded grenade, "or you'll go to Hell. That is," he generously conceded, "unless you're in a state of grace."

But even the squalid litter of war had not wholly obliterated the personality of a charming country house. I picked a few violets from a flower-bed beside a gravel path on which a rain-soaked book was lying. The morocco cover had detached itself, and the book, a study of Spanish literature in the Renaissance, had the squalid appearance of an aristocrat in the gutter. The book lover does not think of a book as inanimate matter, and I was not surprised when Aguilera smoothed out its clammy pages with a caressing touch and carried the poor waif back into the shelter of the ruined house.

A rain-rotted basket-chair sagged into the unkempt lawn, and suddenly I realized what this garden must have looked like on a spring evening before the war. Instead of the faint odour of decaying matter, there would be the scent of spring blossom; instead of the noisy bark of the machine-gun, which reverberated from just behind the garden wall, the laughter of children at play. And perhaps in the basket-chair a scholarly old man puffing away at a cigar, absorbed in that study of Renaissance literature which Aguilera had just carried into shelter. καὶ σέ, γέρον, τὸ πρὶν μὲν ἀκούομεν ὄλβιον εἶναι.<sup>1</sup>

Just as we were leaving we stumbled on one of the

<sup>1</sup> Achilles speaking to Priam: "And we hear that even you, old man, were once blessed."

minor casualties of this war, a little dog which had fallen into a deep pit and was dying of starvation. He was making melancholy, panting noises, and he looked up at us with bewildered eyes.

"I wish I hadn't seen that," said Aguilera. "It will be dangerous to drag him out as lots of these dogs near the front have contracted rabies. I'll go and find a soldier, and have him shot."

The weather, meanwhile, had improved, and we decided to return towards Madrid. As we left Pozuelo I wondered what fate had befallen the kindly folk who lived in this quiet hamlet before the war. It was not very pleasant to be a Frenchman or a Belgian behind the German lines in the Great War, but their fate was certainly preferable to that of Nationalists in the power of the Reds.

I have just been reading an article in *Current History*, April, 1937, an American paper which is fiercely anti-Franco. And this is what Mr. Ziffren has to say of life in Madrid :

"For some unknown reason, hats became taboo for both men and women. Someone said persons who wore hats were aristocrats, and therefore the enemies of the proletariat. . . . Fear of reprisals caused many Rightists, especially the young men, to shave off their moustaches, because the young Leftists regarded such hirsute decoration also as too aristocratic. Others went tieless and coatless in order to appear more proletarian, while still others sought to mask their identity with coloured glasses. . . . Foreigners were not molested by the militia unless they were suspected of hiding Spanish Rightists. . . . I believe it is fair to state that foreigners came off fairly well, generally speaking, although some Latin-Americans, and possibly some

Germans and Italians, got into serious trouble. A few, unfortunately, were killed. The murder of the sisters of the Uruguayan Vice-Consul provoked the break of diplomatic relations between Spain and Uruguay."

"Foreigners came off fairly well, generally speaking . . ." A lukewarm testimonial, riddled by damning qualifications. *Fairly well . . . generally speaking*. True, the sisters of the Uruguayan Vice-Consul were murdered, which was just too bad. And, as we have since learned, the Belgian *chargé d'affaires* was also liquidated, but *generally speaking*, if you were a foreigner you were *fairly safe*.

But, of course, if you were *not* a foreigner . . . merely the kind of Spaniard who did not normally go "tieless and coatless," your chances were less bright.

\* \* \* \* \*

As we approached the observation tower, Aguilera said, "It's getting brighter, so they may shell us. I think I'll leave my car under the shelter of the house."

It was nice to feel that the house was some protection . . . to the car.

"We'd better be careful," said Aguilera, "they can spot us from that tower," and then added with charming inconsistency, "let's lunch up here."

Which we did.

A few seconds later the sun broke through the last defences of the mist, gleamed on the long façade of the Palace, and unshadowed the heart of Madrid. The reverberations of a trench-mortar dissipated the last rags of cloud which still clung to the University City, and revealed the wounded frontage of shell-shattered buildings.

Many years ago I fought my way down an Alpine peak through a driving snowstorm. During a momentary pause, as we lay exhausted on the rocks, the foreground of wind-driven snow suddenly sparkled into light. A puff of wind, the clouds parted, the sun came through, and eyes weary of black rock and grey mist were gladdened by a sudden vista of green hills, blue lakes, and the bluer distances fading into the gold of sun-tinted clouds. Then the return of the sun meant the return of life and colour and warmth to a dark and stormy world, but the cruel sun of Madrid was like the arc lamp in an operating theatre, disclosing every detail of grim and savage wounds. Never, even among the mountains, have I felt, as I felt at Madrid, such a sense of personality behind inanimate things. The riven walls seemed like a wounded face through which a tortured soul found expression. The city radiated waves of human agony, the agony of those for whom every dawn was a hopeless dawn. I thought of men awaiting murder and women dreading rape, and the tragedy of desecrated churches. *Videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus.* I saw those words embroidered on a banner of Our Lady carried in the Easter procession at Seville, and thought of Madrid.

Captain Aguilera handed me his glasses.

"Look in line with that big tree. Just behind it you can see my house, or rather, what's left of it."

I took his glasses.

"Just ten minutes in a car from here," he said.

"Just ten minutes. . . ."

And I knew that he was not thinking of the three thousand annotated books, or the MSS. on which he had worked for seven years.

Aguilera pointed out the tower of a famous church, and I was saddened by the thought of the "Real Absence" in churches where the red lamp has been extinguished by the Red fury. It was Palm Sunday, and I knew what Passion Week must mean to those for whom every street in Madrid is a veritable *Via Dolorosa*.

It is martyrdom which redeems the tragedy of Madrid. *Videte si est dolor . . .* Yes, but there is beauty in the sorrow in which there is nothing squalid. The Catholic pulse still beats in the arteries of Madrid. Red Spain has her Champions, for Red Spain is witnessing a revival of Elizabethan drama, the drama of the missionary priests. The newspaper which two shabby down-at-heel proletarians seem to be sharing with avid interest may be an improvised confessional, behind which a collarless priest gives absolution to a coatless penitent.

As I said farewell to that stricken city, I was ashamed that I could only pity where I should have envied those who are paying so grim a price for the Supreme Christian experience, and I could only hope that persecution might conceivably discover in those of us who belong to the unheroic majority some strain of unsuspected fortitude.

The inescapable lesson of history is that Christianity was never intended to be a comfortable religion. There are periods when conformity is facile and fashionable, but the Church seldom escapes for long the purge of persecution. Martyrdom is the test, and by that standard the Church in Spain has triumphed. It is not only the hierarchy and the priesthood who have died for their Faith. Many a slack and sinning Christian has discovered in these tragic months the

inestimable value of a religion which meant little to him when it cost him little, but which has meant everything in the days when it has demanded everything. The manure of Communism has fertilized the stricken fields of Spain, and from that bloody soil has sprung the glorious flower of heroic Faith.

## CHAPTER X

### TOLEDO AND THE ALCAZAR

ON Monday Aguilera drove us to Toledo. As we branched off from the Madrid road he remarked: "If we hadn't turned aside at this point to rescue the Alcazar garrison, we should have taken Madrid. At the time we didn't know that the Alcazar could have held out for another week."

"But if we'd taken Madrid," he added, "and left the Alcazar garrison to their fate, we'd have deserved to lose the war. But of course nothing could have stopped the army from taking the Toledo road. They'd have mutinied if they'd been told to march to Madrid."

As we drove towards Toledo Foltz made a reference to the British prisoners at Talavera. Aguilera, who had seen them in their prison camp, said that they were inferior in fighting quality to the German and French volunteers. But the men he saw were not representative. Fox and Cornford and the little group of fourteen of whom Romilly and one other alone survive, fought with great gallantry. I am looking forward to reading Romilly's adventures in the International Brigade which is to be published this autumn.

I have read with great interest the moving description in the book *Single to Spain* of the engagement in which practically every member of Romilly's group were killed. The author of this book, K. S. Watson, resigned



from the International Brigade because, as he frankly tells us, he could not stand the strain of war. His honesty in this personal record lends weight to his tribute to the heroism of the English who died in action.

The Saklatvala battalion, which Aguilera had seen both in action and in prison camp, seem to have been composed in the main of unfortunates who were out of work and who had come to Spain because they had been offered well paid jobs behind the lines. They appear to have been only too grateful to the Nationalists for capturing them. In June General Franco released all the foreign prisoners whom he had captured and presented them with a small sum of pocket money for incidental expenses.

The Saklatvala battalion included only a small proportion of convinced Communists. Amongst them was a Red Cross youth from Birmingham. He was actively engaged in binding up the wounds of some of the Nationalists when he was captured. Foltz was impressed by this, but Aguilera was inclined to be cynical.

"After all," he said, "if he believed the usual Red lies that we shoot our prisoners, he would naturally have tried to make a good impression by concentrating on the Nationalist wounded."

As we approached Toledo I wondered whether the first view of the Alcazar would take rank in memory with the great moments of travel, or be faintly disappointing. I shall not readily forget the first impact of Jerusalem, Rome, Venice or Athens, but these cities owe their appeal to the past, to great events which took place before we were born, whereas the Alcazar enshrines history which we have experienced, if only at second hand.

I was in the American Middle West during the last phases of the siege, and every morning I tuned in to the wireless, which owing to differences of time, gave the evening bulletins from Spain. We were all convinced that the garrison could not survive the explosion of the mines which had been laid below the Alcazar.

I remember listening to a moving, though imaginary, description of the last hour in the doomed Alcazar. American wireless is financed by advertisements, a system which has many advantages and some defects. Nothing which I have heard over the wireless affected me more than this reconstruction, told with real feeling, of the last moments of the doomed garrison. Nothing has annoyed me more than the words with which the account ended, "Buy Wrigley's Chewing Gum."

On arriving at Toledo Aguilera went in search of a lady who had been in the siege, and we wandered off to the cathedral. The explosions had shattered the stained glass—otherwise the cathedral was undamaged. Aguilera's friend, who held an important position in a munition factory in which girls were employed, lunched with us. Dona Carmen Aragonés is a woman of thirty, the widow of an army officer who had died in Morocco five years before. Since his death she had lived in Toledo with her father who is a personal friend of Colonel Moscardo, the Commandant of the Alcazar. When the siege began she, her father, her children and her brothers joined the Alcazar garrison.

Dona Carmen enjoys life, and so does Aguilera, and the luncheon party was divided into two sections, a happy and hilarious minority which spoke Spanish, and a disconsolate majority which didn't. I did my best with a phrase book, a mixture of French, Latin

and Italian, but it was a poor best. I am going to learn Spanish before I return to Toledo.

Dona Carmen is what all heroines should be, a beautiful heroine. She is infectiously vivacious, and it was only in rare moments when her face was in repose that one discovered a hint of that iron tenacity which had sustained her through the siege. Aguilera told me that her gaiety and courage was infectious. "One loving soul," says St. Augustine, "sets another on fire," and courage is as contagious as love.

"I shall never forget," said Aguilera, "the first moment that I saw her. I penetrated into the Alcazar with the relieving force and tumbled into a dark vault, struck a match, and then I saw her with her children. She glanced up as the match flickered in the gloom, and I shan't forget the darkness of her eyes or the deathlike pallor of her face."

The "No surrender" spirit of the Alcazar permeated all aspects of the garrison life. The women were as ingenious in discovering substitutes for cosmetics as the men in the improvisation of the defences against artillery fire. When all else failed Dona Carmen tried plaster from the walls as a substitute for face powder.

After lunch we went over the Alcazar, and visited the horrible underground vault where Dona Carmen and her children and the other women had slept in a cell which would have provided comfortable accommodation for two people, the swimming bath into which the women had been transferred in order that they might be as far as possible from the place where the mines were expected to explode, the breeches in the wall through which the storming parties had attempted to force an entrance, and, most moving of all, the dark little office in which Móscardo had talked on the

telephone to his son just before he was shot by the Reds.

From a large window looking out across the Tagus we saw the houses now held by the Reds.

"There was an order a fortnight ago," said Dona Carmen, "forbidding anybody to stand at this window, as we are within range of the Reds."

"Was the order recalled?" I asked Aguilera.

It seemed not. Nobody who had disobeyed the order had been killed, so the order had just lapsed. Spain is like that.

We explored the great crater which had been exploded by the mine, and regretfully retraced our steps from the terrace into the town. As we did so, I had a vision of a rebuilt Alcazar and a listless guide piloting a personally conducted party round its vaults, and repeating for the thousandth time a story which had once thrilled him, but which had long since degenerated into a string of perfunctory words. The desultory firing beyond the Tagus was almost welcome as a reminder of the fact that the Alcazar<sup>^</sup> was still protected from vulgar exploitations by the dignity of war.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE MIRACULOUS MARCH

**T**HE epic of the Alcazar is described in the book of that name by Major Geoffrey McNeill-Moss, better known to the reading public as Geoffrey Moss. I have seldom read a book which I can recommend with greater conviction. Its impartiality has been acclaimed even by reviewers of the Left.

Major McNeill-Moss writes with the exact precision of a staff officer preparing a report for a general, and as a record of one of the greatest sieges of history his work will be a classic in all military libraries, but one need not be a staff officer to enjoy this book. There are pages which moved me more than anything which I have read for many years, a tribute not only to the subject but to the skill of the narrator. The emotion never degenerates into emotionalism, and something of the austerity of the Alcazar finds its way into his narrative.

The siege of the Alcazar, which began on July 22nd, was raised on September 27th. On July 22nd, Colonel Móscardo, after having received an order from the Madrid Government to surrender the fortress, summoned his senior officers and certain of the leading civilians of Toledo to discuss the Government's demands. "Discuss" is hardly the correct word, for the rejection of this demand was inevitable from the

first. Seldom has a garrison started a siege with less hope of success. The revolt had failed in Barcelona and in Madrid. Franco was still separated from Spain by the Straits of Gibraltar patrolled by the Red fleet. Within the garrison both food and water supplies would require the most rigid economy, and, as we shall see, the means of defence at the disposal of the Alcazar might well have been regarded as fantastically inadequate. Their hope of success was faint, but they prayed for and were granted a miracle, the miracle of one of the most astounding marches in the whole history of war.

I will ask the reader to follow in imagination the march of the relieving forces from the blue Straits of Gibraltar to the tawny cliffs that fall from the Alcazar to the Tagus.

On July 16th the revolt broke out in Morocco, in Madrid and in Barcelona. It failed in Madrid and Barcelona, and "the last crusade" as Jerrold felicitously describes the national revolt, would have collapsed but for the magnificent support of the Basques. In Navarre the word went round that Mola would march, and the Basques in Navarre rose to a man. But before Franco's Army in Morocco could establish contact with Mola's Army in Navarre, the Straits of Gibraltar had to be crossed and the Reds expelled from Southern Spain.

Pisaro and Cortés set sail with minute forces to conquer a continent. Their blood still flows in Spanish veins. Pisaro and Cortés have been born again in the conquistadors who led this last crusade for the salvation of Spain. Think of the odds against them. The revolt had failed in Madrid and in Barcelona. Seville had yet to be captured. No sane prophet could

have foreseen that Queipo de Llano would bluff the overwhelming Red force at Seville into retreat. Franco's army in Morocco was separated from Spain by the Straits of Gibraltar patrolled by the Red fleet. The crossing of the Straits was a gamble only less glorious than the determination to land in Andalusia with a force so insignificant that nothing could have saved them had Andalusia been as red as the Reds believed.

Colonel Castajón set out on his career of conquest in a small ship with thirty-five picked officers. The Reds had counted with confidence on Andalusia, and it might well have seemed hopeless to land there without an overwhelming force. But there was no overwhelming force available. Colonel Castajón landed knowing well that his venture of faith might end with a firing party. But his landing was unopposed, and the first chapter of the epic march closed without disaster. It is more than possible that his heroic gesture turned the tide in Andalusia, for there is nothing that makes a greater appeal to the Spaniard than such extravagances of fantastic courage.

Some weeks later Major McNeill-Moss met Colonel Castajón. His officers were particularly proud of the fact that since the force had landed in Spain they had never indented for a gun or a rifle or a round of ammunition. They were fighting their way through Spain with the rifles and ammunition which they had brought with them from Morocco supplemented by what they had taken from the enemy in battle.

Meanwhile General Queipo de Llano had flown to Seville with a few officers. Outside the city he was joined by 183 supporters, soldiers and men of the

Civil Guard. He commandeered lorries, drove to the Radio-Seville station and seized it.

"Faith in a fact," said William James, "often helps to create that fact." De Llano, a fighting pragmatist, proves the truth of William James's dictum. He flooded the ether with statements which were fantastically untrue when made, but which he translated by action into truth. Loud speakers in the cafés broadcast his reckless statements into the streets. Colonel Castajón's audacious landing had created the atmosphere necessary to make the broadcast convincing. Rumour had multiplied the boatload of men who crossed the Straits into a phantom army of 40,000. De Llano summoned all Spaniards in Seville who loved Spain and hated anarchy to rally round him and to welcome the—wholly non-existent—army which was approaching the town. Meanwhile the Reds in the suburbs of Seville had brought artillery into action, and began to shell the town.

"Do you hear those guns?" shouted de Llano. "Listen to the glorious artillery of Spain routing the Red Marxist scum." The Red guns continued shooting, and the more noise they made the more panicky became their sympathizers listening in on the wireless. De Llano took Seville with the artillery of the Reds.

Seville was saved by the brilliance and courage of de Llano, and by the cowardice and incompetence of the Reds, who outnumbered de Llano's hastily collected forces by at least a hundred to one. In England, unfortunately, General Queipo de Llano is less famous as the saviour of Seville than notorious as broadcaster whose humour is condemned by our exacting standards of taste.

Few people in our country realize that his famous



broadcasts are primarily intended to cheer and amuse the men at the Front. He speaks to them informally in a democratic style which would be impossible in our own army. The soldiers love his Rabelaisian and bucolic wit, and their immense respect for the gallantry of the man who saved Seville by a miracle of courage and bluff is reinforced by their affection for a General who is incapable of pomposity. Old-fashioned Spaniards look down their noses at his more outrageous jests. He is fond of utilizing a comic aside who interjects his own comments. "Caballero," begins the General, "is a . . . what did you say?" Murmurs off. "What's that? 'Caballero is a —'." The Spanish word could be translated by less than five letters of our alphabet. And then after a pause the General adds in a tone of shocked dismay: "Oh, you know I couldn't *possibly* say that."

De Llano's broadcasts are addressed not only to Nationalists but to the Reds, who are forbidden to tune in to Seville, and who, because they are not only Red but Spanish, take a particular delight in ignoring this veto. De Llano's colourful character studies of the leading personalities of the Valencia Government are said to give even greater delight to the Reds than to the Nationalists.

The capture of Seville did nothing to solve the problem of transporting troops across a sea still commanded by the Red fleet. Some reinforcements were sent over by air, but this was a slow process, and on August 5th Franco decided that the time had come to repeat Castajón's exploit. Two mail steamers crowded with legionaries and Moors, escorted by aircraft, an armed trawler and an obsolete gunboat, started across the Straits. A large Government destroyer, armed

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with five 4-inch guns, challenged the convoy. The obsolete gunboat fired a few shots ; a few bombs from the aeroplanes splashed into the sea, and Goliath retreated in panic. Castajón's handful of men had not waited for reinforcements. They had already covered many a breathless mile on their road to Toledo when Franco's troops began to cross the Straits.

Of all the myths propagated in this country by Reds and Pinks, none is more wholly fatuous than the legend of a hostile country cowed into submission by Franco's Moors. Every town and every village which Castajón entered welcomed him as a deliverer with delirious enthusiasm. Had the peasants been hostile, his small force must inevitably have been surrounded and massacred if not on disembarkation at least within the early days of his advance. The Nationalists counted on popular support, and did not count in vain. They were forced to assume that their communications did not need to be protected, for there were no troops to protect them. Every normal military precaution was ignored because it had to be ignored. The Alcazar had to be relieved. That was all that mattered. And so through every town and through every village the relieving force advanced at the fantastic speed of over 20 miles a day, overwhelming Government detachments who summoned up sufficient courage to remain and fight.

On the 11th August they sighted Badajoz and on the 13th they took the town by storm.

The Badajoz garrison was about the same strength as the garrison which held Badajoz against Wellington. Wellington had 21,000 men at his disposal, Castajón just over 3,000 men. Wellington had a siege train of

fifty-two pieces at his disposal, Castajón four field guns. Yet Wellington, one of the greatest generals in British history, took eighteen days to capture Badajoz whereas Castajón stormed Badajoz after three days and captured it in thirty hours of street fighting.

The name of Badajoz is associated in history with a massacre which has stained the record of the victors. Here is the account of an eyewitness.

“Now commenced that wild and desperate wickedness which tarnished the lustre of the soldiers’ heroism, for hundreds risked and many lost their lives in trying to stop the violence. But the madness generally prevailed. And as the worst men are the leaders here, all the dreadful passions of human nature were displayed. Shameless rapacity, brutal intemperance, savage lust, cruelty, and murder, shrieks and piteous lamentations, groans, shouts, imprecations, the hissing of fires bursting from the houses, the crashing of doors and windows, and the reports of muskets used in violence, resounded for two days and nights in the streets of Badajoz. On the third, when the city was sacked, when the soldiers were exhausted by their own excesses, the tumult rather subsided than was quelled. The wounded men were then looked to and the dead disposed of.”

I am quoting, not as the reader might imagine, from the files of the *New Statesman* but from Napier’s *History of the Peninsular War*, for the only massacre which ever took place in Badajoz was a massacre of the Spanish garrison by British troops. The mythical massacre attributed to the Nationalists in this war was described by an “eyewitness” who was in Portugal at the time.

Any troops but Spanish would have demanded a

rest after the thirty hours of stubborn street fighting which had been the last phase in the fight for Badajoz, but there was no rest for the men who were to save the Alcazar. On the morning of the 16th they were off again. On August 9th they had reached Oronza, having advanced 250 miles in three weeks, captured Badajoz and fought over twenty minor actions on the way.

Suvaroff's Alpine march has often been described as the greatest military march in history, but Suvaroff has been eclipsed by Castajón.

I borrow, with Major McNeill-Moss' permission a vivid description of Castajón's column on the march from his book, *The Epic of the Alcazar*, published by Rich and Cowan.

"Ahead comes as scout, an improvised armoured car, captured from the enemy : a space : three or four touring cars with legionaries and machine-guns : another space : then the main body, a main body carried in the strangest fleet of motor coaches that it is possible to imagine. They have been impress'd where found and are gaily coloured, in peasant and small-town taste ; scarlet, white, bright blue, orange, apple green, purple, pink. They are packed with armed men. Forty coaches of legionaries : forty coaches of Moors : eight lorries of ammunition, perhaps with two field-guns in them : another forty coaches of legionaries : a wireless signal waggon, hastily contrived ; an ambulance or two : a tank-waggon for motor spirit : a touring car with machine-guns trained to the rear.

"Upon the roofs of all the coaches is the baggage ; mattresses of every colour—for the Spaniard who will fight starving and unpaid, hates to lie hard ; bundles in counterpanes, in women's shawls, in gay striped

blankets ; valises, items of loot—for of all the world's looters the Moor is king ; a coop of hens ; a parrot in a cage ; a nanny-goat in milk ; a net of melons ; then, perhaps on every twentieth roof-top, three men lounging beside an anti-aircraft gun, cocked skyward, ready to fire.

: “Fastened to the radiators are religious mascots ; a crucifix found in a wrecked church ; a Blessed Virgin with crown of cracker jewels—and perhaps beside her, placed there without a thought of irreverence or incongruity, a Mickey Mouse.

“The legionaries are in khaki shirts, short-sleeved, with gilt-embroidered badges on black tabs, with bandoliers, slung rifles, tasselled glengarry caps of khaki drill. They have taut faces, burnt with the sun, plastered with white dust. They are fit, alert, confident, conscious of being masters of their trade, certain of victory ; and, knowing that, cheerful and gay.

“The Moors are solemn and patient. Sometimes at this or that unusual sight they may be momentarily curious. They are as a rule not much darker than the Spaniards, but there is a certain grey or yellow tinge under the dry walnut pigment of their skin. They are shanky, hollow-cheeked, sinewy. They are polite. They seldom smile. They walk softly, and with the forward thrust of animals that live dangerously. They wear the baggy trousers of their corps, turbans, and open tunic-shirts.

“In battle the legionaries advance in those short baffling rushes which only the finest infantry, once down, will rise to, when under fire. The Moors in battle work upon their stomachs and wriggle forward at a reptilian speed. ‘In-bussed,’ upon the line of

route, they sit huddled in their blanket-like burnouses ; for, when not active, they seem always cold.

. . . . .

“ The tactics of such a column had been devised to suit the conditions of this campaign. The enemy had always the advantage of numbers ; but no knowledge, little skill, no final steadiness. For the Nationalists, therefore, the game was bluff ; audacity ; manœuvre ; speed. And the battle was every time the same.

“ The leading armoured car breasts a rise. The road stretches on, grey asphalt powdered with dust, and on each side emptiness. A mile ahead there is a village ; one-storeyed, mud-walled, clustering around a lofty dusty Baroque church. The armoured car slows and sends back a signal. There are two flashes from the village, bright even in the sunlight. Guns ! The village held ! Ah !

“ Two shells sing. They burst high overhead. The armoured car stops. Its driver finds reverse. The car drones slowly back behind the skyline. The plain is empty once again ; stubble, dry maize, scorched prairie, rolling land the colour of a horse's mane, stupendous distances, a range of hills, coral pink and far away ; horizon ; blue sky ; silence.

“ Behind the slope the coaches close up and stop. The legionaries are out. The Moors are out. The plan is ready ; ‘ Sealed Pattern Order of Attack ’—to meet—‘ Sealed Pattern Village with Sealed Pattern Order of Defence.’ A little party with machine-guns doubles out, clears the road, and makes ready to advance, astride it. A battalion with its machine-guns is doubling out into the empty land that stretches for ever to the left. Another battalion is doubling out

upon the other side into the emptiness that stretches to the right.

"The battalion in reserve—'less the party with machine-guns on the road'—takes position, scattered in little groups. The wireless in a lorry has reported and is calling for planes.

"Now the empty coaches are all in reverse, creeping back cautiously, clear of the fight. The anti-aircraft guns are ready, waiting. The commander of the force draws near behind the hill-crest, and with him goes a little group of men with field-glasses.

"The word is given. The centre party with its machine-guns breaks cover over the ridge and, well extended, goes forward on each side of the road; cautious but never checking. For some time they continue on their way. The field-guns on the village fringe bark at them. Two shells burst overhead. Then all at once the mud walls of the village blaze with rifle and machine-gun fire; and from the trenches, scraped in the fields on left and right, and up till now unseen, a furious fusillade begins. The men of the centre party throw themselves down. Their machine-guns come into action.

"For half an hour the air whistles with bullets. Once or twice the commander of the columns crawls to the crest line of the ridge, to see that everything is progressing according to plan. To left and right the flanking battalions have trotted out. Now they are a mile, or more, outside the farthest trenches of the enemy. They face 'front' again, and order their advance, so as to pass a mile wide on each side of the village. The town-bred volunteers catch sight of them and, after shouting and pointing, bring their rifles round. The range is fifteen hundred yards. At this

distance such rifle-men are hardly dangerous. The bullets sing over-head. Now and then one falls short, flicks up the dust and goes by, humming.

"The advance goes on round either flank. Now the machine-guns in the village cannot fire at the advancing troops, who are already too far round for them. The volunteers within the village look about them, wondering what will happen next. Planes have been called for by their commander, also. But in an army of eager amateurs messages arrive, or not, according to their luck. The gunners on the village fringe grow restless. Guns are not rifles; they are valuable! They clank the drop-fronts of their ammunition limbers shut. Presently they begin man-handling the guns out of position. The rifle-men hear that sound. So the guns are off? Some fire faster. Some look about them. A few slink back.

"Now the flanking battalions of the Nationalists can see clear behind the village. They halt, lie down, make ready their machine-guns.

"In the village all is confusion. The Marxists have gone into committee. Syndicalists are keeping up their fire. Anarchists favour a forward movement and a charge, at any cost. But soon the less courageous of the militia-men are slinking back. Someone tries to stop them. An argument ensues, bitter, wordy. Others come up and take part in it. Someone in comparative authority forms up a party and starts it off towards the rear. But at such times a formed body moving rearward is like a magnet. Stragglers dribble out after it. Presently the exit of the village is like the exit of a cinema, after the show is done. The militia-men trot away. Some motors in the village are sounding horns, perhaps to rally the troops, perhaps to get the road



clear for themselves. Presently the retreat is general ; and in no order at all. Three, four, five thousand men ; all keeping to the asphalt road which runs ahead of them, over the naked countryside.

“ Out on the flanks are the Nationalist machine-gunners. They have been waiting long for this. They open fire. Their bullets intersect upon the road, at a spot perhaps half a mile behind the village. The volunteers’ retreat becomes a rout, and all press on, but no man can pass the zone beaten by the machine-guns’ fire. Those near the front of the retreating crowd halt and recoil from the corpses of their comrades, lying in the road ; those behind press forward, clamouring. There comes a moment when the surging mass bursts forward like a flood. It forms the perfect target. Two of the guns keep up their cross-fire. The others traverse. The militia-men go down like dry thistles before a scythe. At last they realize the road is death. They scatter from it, out into the fields. There they are lost indeed ; no pavements !

“ Four planes come droning up from the south. They part and swing wide from the village, two on each side of it. Flying low, they drop some little bombs, well on the flanks of the scattered militia-men. They circle round, closing in, dropping their bombs, shepherding these townsmen back to the road again. The leaders of the rout take to the asphalt. The going is easier. They have dropped their rifles ; they struggle out of bandoliers and toss them aside. They are out of breath. They jostle each other as they run. They keep to the road. When they are thick enough, the planes wheel round and swoop low, machine-gunning them. The pursuit goes on till there seems nothing left worth chasing. For two, three,

perhaps four miles the road is dotted with dead and dying.

. . . . .

“Behind the village the centre detachment of the Nationalists has closed, and packed its machine-guns. Already it is in its coaches. The flanking battalions are legging it, back across the open land to where their transport waits for them. The legionaries come to their coaches. Sometimes, passing a saint or Blessed Virgin on a radiator, they will touch the medallions dangling outside their shirts, or cross themselves. They climb back into the coaches and they settle down. Ready !

“Two hours and twenty minutes’ delay ! A dozen casualties among the legionaries and Moors. Another set-piece engagement. Another six hundred militia-men less to fight. Always the same !

“Not quite always, for sometimes the Government commander, farther back, will rush up another motorized column to retrieve the day. The men will ‘de-buss’ and come forward with a ragged valour, in a counter-attack which would daunt Regular troops. The legionaries will extend again, a little wearily, lie flat and mow them down with fire. The delay will be longer. There will be another half-dozen casualties among the Nationalists. A coach will somehow be set on fire. And in the end, when the counter-attack is broken, there will be another five hundred militia-men who will not fight again.

“The column forms up. The coaches are ready now ; scarlet, white, bright blue, orange, apple green, purple pink ; like a variegated paper streamer stretched incongruously across this tawny field of war.

“The armoured cars move on, stopping sometimes to clear the road of dead and dying militia-men. They pull the bodies to the side and leave them. There they will lie for weeks, horrible, worried by dogs at night, stinking in the sunlight. The column moves on and leaves them. Toledo and the Alcazar are still a hundred miles away, and the little Army of Africa has neither men nor time enough to bury dead.”

## CHAPTER XII

### THE EPIC OF THE ALCAZAR

*θάνατον εἰσορῶ πελας Ἱερέα θανόντων<sup>1</sup>*

EURIPIDES.

**W**HAT manner of men were these who held the Alcazar while columns of relief forced their way northward from the Gibraltar Straits?

Colonel Móscardo, the Commandant, was a middle-aged soldier who had lived in semi-retirement for some time. When the War broke out he was military Governor of the province. "He was a tall, reserved, gentle-mannered man," writes Major McNeill-Moss, "a little awkward, rather punctillious; happy enough with a few people he knew well, but shy in company. He had a strict sense of duty. He was religious. In a nation where most were slack, he was exact."

We are apt to contrast the strong, silent man whom we believe to be characteristically Anglo-Saxon with the ebullient Latin. We forget that Roman blood still flows in Latin veins, and that the reserve of the Romans was often more reticent than the strong silences of the Anglo-Saxon. Tacitean is still the aptest epithet for a phrase which is both pregnant and compressed.

The Roman astringency which has made the Latin

<sup>1</sup> I see Death the High Priestess of the Dead standing by.

language the most economical medium for the expression of thought, has left its mark on the Iberian peninsula, in support of which let me cite a characteristic Spanish story for which Salamanca is the setting.

Fray Luis de Leon had been acquitted after four years' imprisonment by the Inquisition. He was escorted in triumph to his lecture room where a vast audience awaited him expectantly, hoping for a moving account of his sufferings. The friar got up, glanced round the crowded hall and began his lecture.

"As we were saying yesterday . . ."

He then took up the argument of his lecture where it had been cut short four years before.

The men of the Alcazar were economical in verbal heroics but extravagant in heroic deeds. The man who played the lead in this drama seldom appears on the stage and never appears before the footlights. He is sensed rather than seen, but among the few brief words which are attributed to him are some which will be quoted so long as Spain endures.

The telephone plays its part as a stage property in this drama. The bell rings in the dark little office whose walls are hung with photographs of men who commanded the Alcazar in times less stirring than these. Móscardo picks up the receiver and a voice at the other end informs him that his son has been captured by the Reds and will be shot unless Móscardo surrenders the Alcazar. The boy comes to the telephone and asks his father what he is to do.

"All you can do," replies his father, "is to pray for us and to die for Spain."

"That is quite simple," said the boy. "Both I will do."

As a pendant to this Tacitean dialogue we may

quote the words with which Móscardo is said to have greeted the Colonel who relieved the Alcazar. Móscardo had lost his son but saved his garrison. He stood stiffly to the salute and said, "No change to report."

No change. The garrison had not changed hands, and the old flag of Christian Spain, red and yellow, was still flying over the shattered shell of the Alcazar.

During the siege the outside world believed that the Alcazar was garrisoned exclusively by young cadets. This was not so, for the siege started while the cadets were on leave and only eight of them went through the siege. The garrison included, however, 150 young soldiers whose average age was between seventeen and eighteen, rather less than the average age of the cadets. The tributes which the world paid to the heroic cadets were more than earned by the soldiers as young as the cadets who played so memorable a part in the siege.

The Civil Guard formed the largest group in the garrison. Six hundred of them served under their own officers and their own commander, whose brilliance and fertility of invention were among the most important factors in the siege. There were 150 army officers in the garrison, 35 Phalangists, 10 Carlists, 25 members of the Monarchist Association and 40 peasants and workmen, making a total of 1,028 for the garrison. There were 670 non-combatants including 100 men too old to serve, 520 women and 50 children.

The garrison was well supplied with rifles and with small-arm ammunition. They had twelve machine-guns, none of which were less than fourteen years old. They possessed two light guns for which there were a dozen rounds of ammunition, and one small trench mortar, for which the ammunition was also severely limited. The guns and the trench mortar were too

precious to be used excepting at a crisis. There was also a very limited stock of bombs.

For all practical purposes the Alcazar was defended by machine-guns and rifles against big guns, aeroplanes, trench mortars, flame-throwers and tanks.

The garrison were on very short rations throughout the siege. One horse or one mule was killed daily to provide soup for the entire garrison. The daily ration of gritty hard bread was so small that it could be "completely covered by a cupped hand." The drinking water was doled out at the rate of a litre a day. There was no water for washing. Dona Carmen mentioned this as one of the major hardships of the siege. Among the minor hardships may be mentioned the lack of light. Mule or horse fat provided a substitute for candles, but as only one mule or one horse was killed daily, the supply of fat was limited, and lighting was confined to places where light was essential. The women and children spent most of their time in darkness.

Space will only permit me to mention the more outstanding incidents of the siege.

On September 9th Major Rojo approached with a white flag. He was blindfolded and taken into the Alcazar. He had been both a cadet and an officer instructor in the Academy, and he cannot have felt very happy as he was led to the Commandant. His mission was to offer the garrison their lives if they would surrender. His proposal was, of course, rejected, but on leaving he asked Móscardo if he could convey any requests to those outside. The end seemed near and the mines under the Alcazar were nearly ready.

Móscardo asked that a priest might be sent to the garrison to baptize children born during the siege.

The Government agreed to this request, and the priest selected for this mission was Canon Vasquez Camarassa.

An Irish Bishop who had heard Canon Camarassa preach told me that he was one of the most rhetorical preachers in Spain. He was most popular, and could and did demand very high fees for a sermon.

Before the Revolution he was known to sympathize with the Left Wing, a fact to which he owed his life. He was the only priest who was allowed to leave Red Spain after the outbreak of war, and on arriving in Paris he published a letter in which he denounced the Communists, and in which he defended his own record. The Canon's apologia read convincingly to me but made no impression at all in Nationalist Spain. Of the priests in Toledo, only seven who were in hiding escaped massacre. The Nationalists can scarcely be blamed for suspecting the sincerity of any priest, other than a Basque, who is on friendly terms with the Reds.

The Canon was criticized, among other things, for the fact that he did not remain in the Alcazar, and left the garrison with no further hope of the Sacrament at a time when they were expecting sudden death. To this he answered that he had promised to return, that he could not break his word, that if he did break his word the Government would take prompt revenge on such priests as were in their power.

I have heard both sides of this argument. I have read the Canon's apologia, and I have heard the views of his critics, and my own view is a compromise, which should please English readers who believe, wrongly, that extreme views are always wrong.

There is no reason to suspect the sincerity of priests with Left Wing sympathies before the outbreak of the



war, and when the war broke out it was natural that Canon Camarassa should avoid attacking the Popular Front in which he had professed to believe, and it was certainly tempting to postpone his ultimate denunciation of the Government's crimes until he had bought his right to leave Red Spain by appearing to condone those crimes. He chose, as many men in his position would have chosen, the path of compromise, and only those who are confident that they would have chosen martyrdom may fairly blame him.

Canon Camarassa visited the Alcazar in lay dress. A clerical collar would have been too provocative to his allies. He baptized the newly born babies and celebrated Mass, and all those present, having fasted and confessed, received Holy Communion. The Canon then, with that eloquence which had made him so famous a preacher, warned all present of the inescapable and inevitable doom which would be theirs if they refused to surrender. Here again he may have spoken as he did because he was a kindly well-meaning man who wished to save those who could still be saved, or, as his critics maintain, because he had been charged by the Reds to secure at all costs the surrender of the Alcazar.

All those who heard him believed that they had been shriven for the death that was imminent.

That evening Major Rojo returned and offered the evacuation of the women and children. Four representatives of the women were sent for and asked to consult the other women and to bring back their corporate answer.

Let us follow these women down into the vaults of the Alcazar, those darkened vaults in which they were to debate the offer of life. None of them expected to

survive if they stayed, for both within and without the Alcazar it was expected that the mines would destroy the garrison.

Most men die courageously when the moment comes. Few criminals collapse on the way to the gallows. It is less easy to wait for a death which lingers. Every night these women could hear the insistent burr of the pneumatic drills below the vaults. When the burr ceased they woke from fitful slumbers as if some inner monitor should warn them that the sudden silence was the prelude to the explosion.

Time has a disintegrating effect on courage. A long illness may transform a Stoic into a coward. Now the women of the Alcazar were offered not only life instead of the overwhelming probability of death, but an escape from the intolerable misery of unbearable surroundings. They had already endured seven weeks in the shadow of death, seven weeks on horrible food and insufficient water, seven weeks cooped up in dark, dank cells, seven weeks of sleeplessness. Dona Carmen told me that among the major trials of the siege was the noise. Three feet of stone ceiling separated the vault in which she slept from a courtyard which was regularly shelled. The clatter of the falling columns mingled with the explosions, each one of which seemed to be bursting exactly behind her head. Only women of heroic courage could endure for seven days what these women endured for seven weeks.

The women in the Alcazar refused for one moment to entertain the suggestion that they should leave. The representatives returned in a few minutes with the unanimous reply that the women of the Alcazar would not desert their men, and even if their own men wished to surrender, they would oppose this action,

and if necessary would follow the example of the women of Saragossa who in the siege of 1808 took up arms and manned the defence.

By this time the women and children had been moved to the swimming baths which were furthestmost from the points below which mining operations had been heard.

At 6.20 a.m. on September 18th the rifle fire ceased. There was a great silence. In the Log Book of the Alcazar a line was drawn below the last entry as this moment, and underneath was written, "All possible having been done, we commend ourselves to God."

On the ridges north of the town those whom the Madrid Government wished to honour were occupying the front seats for the show. Pressmen had their notebooks on their knees, cinematograph men were poised and alert. These kindly folk waited not only with excitement but with sympathy, for they believed that all those in the garrison would die.

A stir of expectancy passes through the spectators. The Minister of War, to whom this honour has been allotted, presses a button. The roar of the explosion shatters the silence of the hills. The last fragments of the South West tower, a hundred feet high, cascade in tumbling boulders down the slope, and there are some who sigh to think of young men butchered to make a Moscow holiday.

They sigh too soon. The casualties of the garrison were slight. Only eighteen were killed in the fighting that followed, and only two in the actual explosion. Before long the escarpments of the Alcazar were red with the blood of men mown down by the furious fire of the unconquerable defenders. Within twelve

minutes of the explosion three enormous breaches had been blown in the defences of the Alcazar. Men weakened by privation climbed desperately on to the disintegrating masonry of shattered walls. The breeches were held, and one more miracle was added to the miracles already inscribed in the record of the Alcazar.

More than once in telling the story of the Alcazar I have used the word "miracle," and I have used it because no other word seemed adequate. Nobody can follow the story of the column of relief, from its first passage across the Straits dominated by the Red fleet to the walls of Toledo, without realising that at every stage of their amazing march the odds were fantastic against success. Even in the final phase success depended on yet another miracle, a miracle of incompetence.

Toledo lies in a loop of the Tagus, and a line of trenches dug along this loop must have held up the relieving force for weeks. Meanwhile the Alcazar would have been forced inevitably to surrender owing to lack of food. This elementary precaution was neglected. No trenches were dug, and the overwhelming majority of the Red army fled in confusion.

Not once but many times the garrison had survived an attack which, if resolutely pressed home, must inevitably have succeeded. Again and again the column of relief gambled on fantastic chances and every gamble came off. "Yes, they were lucky," the reader may murmur, "they certainly got all the breaks." That is one way of putting it. But there is another explanation easier to reconcile with the mathematical theory of chances: "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

There were moments when the Alcazar garrison dared to hope that they might be relieved, but these moments were short-lived. For week after week they fought under the shadow of inescapable doom. They were content to fight on not only because they were helping Spain by immobilising a large force of Reds, but also because there are some defeats more glorious than victory. The Alcazar might fall but it would never surrender, and the captured shell would remain not as a symbol of a Red triumph but as a symbol of that spirit which was saving Christian Spain.

## CHAPTER XIII

### FROM TALAVERA TO SEVILLE

**I** SAID good-bye to Aguilera with keen regret. His general philosophy had enlightened, and his scholarship instructed me during the days which we spent together. I hope we shall meet again.

Señor Herrero of the Press Bureau at Talavera very kindly offered to drive me to Merida. My friend was a keen Carlist, and he sniffed indignantly at the suggestion that the old régime had been backward in reforms. On the contrary, he assured me, Primo de Rivera had instituted far more radical reforms during his brief period of power than any of the Liberal Governments in the last hundred years.

Our driver was something of a freak. He not only sounded his horn before reaching the corner, but even cornered on the right side of the road. At only one point during our journey did he remind me of Aguilera. He suddenly stepped on the accelerator and the car bounded forward, a justifiable acceleration for at this point we were only separated by little more than a mile or so from the Red lines.

The front in Spain is very thinly held. For mile after mile there are no trenches, and the line is held by outposts separated by varying intervals. In these circumstances infiltration is tempting, and raiders not infrequently steal through the outposts, loot a few

chickens, fire a few shots and then return to their own lines. An Irish lady journalist had a narrow escape from the Reds while motoring near the front. Her car was riddled with bullets, and she was lucky to escape with her life. Sometimes an airman swoops down, peppers a car with his machine-gun, and disappears. During one of my journeys in Spain I passed a car which had been thus destroyed from the air.

At one point we had a choice of route, the shorter of which was very near the Red lines. We asked an elderly Carlist in a village for his advice. He motioned us on. The short cut was safe, he insisted. We had nothing to fear. All of which only meant, as I of course knew, that the Reds had not raided that particular section of the road for some considerable time, a fact which was no more and no less reassuring than the knowledge that none of those who had defied the official regulations and continued to look out of the Alcazar windows towards the Tagus, had as yet stopped a bullet.

From Merida I travelled by train to Seville and arrived in the early hours of the morning. I was lucky to get a bed in a small hotel near the station, and next day I transferred to the Andalusia. I stayed in Seville through Easter week.

## CHAPTER XIV

### BATTLE AGAINST CHAOS

THERE is a passage in *Greeks and Barbarians*<sup>1</sup> which has a certain relevance to the war in Spain. I enjoyed this book not only because the author, Professor J. A. K. Thomson, is an inspiring critic of Hellenism but also because he is a brilliant translator. Good translators are even more rare than good writers, and few renderings combine, as Professor Thomson's combine, accuracy of rendering with felicity of expression.

"The typical heroes of ancient story are alike in their championship of law and order. I suppose the two most popular and representative were Heracles and Theseus. Each goes up and down Greece and Barbary destroying *hybristai*, local robber-kings, strong savages, devouring monsters, ill customs and every manner of 'lawlessness' and 'injustice.' In their place each introduces Greek manners and government, Law and Justice. It was this which so attracted Greek sympathy to them and so excited the Greek imagination. . . . As for us, our sympathies are ready to flow out to the picturesque defeated monsters—the free Centaurs galloping on Pelion—the cannibal Minotaur lurking in his Labyrinth. But then our bridals are not liable to be disturbed by raids of wild horsemen

<sup>1</sup> George Allen.



from the mountains, nor are our children carried off to be dealt with at the pleasure of a foreign monarch. People who meet with such experiences get surprisingly tired of them. There is a figure known to mythologists as a Culture Hero. He it is who is believed to have introduced law and order and useful arts into the rude community in which he arose. Such heroes were specially regarded, and the reverence felt for them measures the need of them. Thus in ancient Greece we read of Prometheus and Palamêdes, the Finns had their Wainomoinen, the Indians of North America their Hiawatha. Think again of historical figures like Charlemagne and Alfred, like Solon and Numa Pompilius, even Alexander the Great. A peculiar romance clings about their names. Why? Only because to people fighting what must often have seemed a losing battle against chaos and night the institution and defence of law and order seemed the most romantic thing a man could do. And so it was."

To the Englishman there is nothing romantic about a policeman. They accept him as if he were a natural phenomenon like the sunrise. They take law and order for granted. Our island has never been invaded since the Conquest and its revolutions have been but few in number and mild in character.

The secure and comfortable atmosphere of this island dulls the critical faculty, and very few Englishmen have lived through a reign of Red terror such as the terror in Russia, in Bavaria during the period of Communist control, in Hungary under Bela Kun, or in Spain during the four months of anarchy which followed during the return to power of the Popular Front. Though we have given Europe its greatest

imaginative literature, we are not, as a whole, an imaginative race. We find it difficult to translate continental terrorism into English terms. But the effort is worth making.

"After the February elections of 1936," writes Mr. Arthur Bryant, in the *Observer*, "when a so-called 'Popular Front' Government, with an electoral minority in the country but a majority in the Cortes, was formed only to capitulate to its own extreme elements, the work of Communist agitators went on unchecked. Lists were prepared of those who were to be killed in every place, preparatory to the revolutionary assumption of power on the usual Marxist lines. In hundreds of towns and villages off the beaten track, the most degraded members of the local community, spurred on by the agents of the International, instituted a reign of terror. Murders, robberies, rapes, and burnings, provided they were exercised in the sacred name of the clenched fist and the proletarian dictatorship, passed unpunished and unrebuked by the Government. In Malaga alone, according to the testimony of a British resident, every church in the place (some forty in all, with the exception of the cathedral and two small buildings) had been burnt before the outbreak of the civil war. And this in a country where popular Catholic feeling, to put it on its lowest basis, is certainly as strong as it is in Britain. Should we call the law-abiding, religious elements in Hull or Huddersfield Fascists if they took up arms against a Government which had allowed and openly encouraged a mob of hooligans to burn down every Nonconformist chapel in the town, and threaten death to all who would not shout their slogan? Can a Liberal like Franco, who supported the republican

revolution of 1931, be justly accounted a Fascist and a reactionary because he took his life in his hands and headed a popular rising of the more responsible elements in the community against a Government that permitted such a state of anarchy? What Englishman, given the same conditions, would not have done the same?"

At the moment these things seem very remote from English life, but it is by no means certain that we shall continue to escape from the periodic waves of Red terror which sweep from time to time over Europe, and we may be sure that even the mildest form of Red Terrorism in England would transform most of the amiable "pinks" who are to-day abusing Franco, into ardent supporters of law and order. They will probably be among the first to scream for an English Franco to save them.

To the stay at home Englishman revolutions may seem rather romantic, but "people who meet with such experiences get extraordinarily tired of them," so tired that they are ready to follow the first culture-hero who will offer them what Heracles and Theseus did for the Greeks. And this is the cause of that devotion to Mussolini and Hitler which is so puzzling to people who have never known insecurity.

I have often asked supporters of democracy in this country why they should object to a democratic country freely electing a dictator and entrusting that dictator with dictatorial powers. I sometimes suspect that our Progressives regard a foreign country as "democratic" if it is ready to accept a form of Government of which English radicals approve, and undemocratic if it is perverse enough to prefer the kind of Government which the majority of its citizens desire.

I do not believe that dictatorships can ever be anything more than a temporary expedient in any great European country. Fascism has never arisen in Europe as a spontaneous movement, but only as a reaction against the Red terror. England will only turn to Fascism if those who to-day are loudest in their denunciation of Fascism ever succeed in destroying our confidence in democracy. If Anti-Fascists spent less time in attacking Mussolini and more energy in counteracting Communism, the future of English democracy would be less uncertain.

There is a type of Liberal intellectual who travels with deputations to other countries, and professes himself an enthusiastic admirer of internationalism, but who never mentally leaves England. He cannot escape from that climate of security in which he has always lived. He never really meets foreigners; foreigners meet him, on his plane and at his level. He never sees foreigners as human beings but as abstractions passionately interested in concepts such as democracy, universal suffrage, Socialism and so forth. He forgets that even in England politically minded people are the exception. Many Englishmen never vote at all, and many of those who do, vote in a perfunctory fashion. They suspect that the essential nature of the Government under which they live will not be radically changed whether they send a National Conservative or a supporter of the Labour Party to Westminster. Life, so they think, will go on much as it did before whatever happens. Crime, sex and sport, will, as before, provide the papers with real news, news about things that matter. Property will be respected and burglars and murderers will be hunted down and captured and convicted and con-

demned to death or imprisonment, and the police will do their duty. The accepted framework of a civilised society will be maintained.

Let us clear our minds of cant. Democracy has been comparatively successful in Great Britain, because, and only because, Conservatives, Labour and Liberals have been prepared to govern within the framework of common principles. The difference between the parties is a difference of emphasis and not a difference of principle. Democracy of the English type can never, and will never, work in Spain, for the Spaniard does not understand compromise. No country can prosper under a régime of alternating socialism and conservatism. Democracy works in England, but in Spain democracy degenerates into Red Revolution. Democracy is possible in England because the English play cricket, and they carry into practice the philosophy of cricket. The great hearted British public decide that one particular team has been batting long enough, and that it's time that the other crowd had their innings too. Politicians do their best to bowl out their opponents, but they don't bomb them out. They know that they will be batting in their turn before long, and that therefore life must not be made impossible for the man at the wicket. Even in England those who are anxious for radical reform are becoming increasingly distrustful of Parliamentary democracy. Our intellectuals profess to believe in democracy for propaganda purposes, but nobody who has studied the works of Laski, Strachey, Cole and other authors favoured by our Left Book Club, has any illusions as to the fate of democracy if these people come into power.

In England all parties are equally concerned to safeguard the framework of civilised society, but if the

framework itself is imperilled, as happened in Italy and Germany, and is happening in Spain, society is sharply divided into those who wish to restore this framework, and those who are solely concerned to destroy it. When the police cease to function the average citizen is not ready die for the abstract right to vote or freely to criticize the Government policy. These things which seem so important to us are out of the picture at times of Red peril. Ordinary people have a keen sense of the realities of life, and attach far more importance to the basic decencies of civilised life than to the right to play an infinitesimally important part in the game of party politics.

Democracy in Spain has been destroyed for a generation by the extremists of the Left. Fortunately the Red Terror which provoked Franco's rising, ensured its success. Had not Franco been welcomed as a deliverer in every town in which he appeared, he could never have dared that audacious and brilliant march from Algeciras to Madrid. His communications were unprotected, save by the fact that the population was on his side.

Franco to-day has some half million men on four disconnected fronts. Thousands of miles of roads leading to different parts of the front are virtually unprotected. As one motors along these roads, many of which are only separated from the Red lines by a thin line of separated outposts, one passes through village after village policed only by middle-aged volunteers wearing the scarlet beret of the Carlists or the blue forage cap of the Spanish Phalanx. On lonely mountain roads I have passed isolated and unescorted lorries. In Ireland during the Civil War no unprotected Black and Tan lorry would have reached a destination

accessible only along deserted roads. If the peasantry in Nationalist Spain were hostile as the Irish peasantry were hostile, roads would be blocked by felled trees and lorries would be ambushed. But whereas the Black and Tans were fighting for a Foreign Power, Franco's army is not only National but Democratic. National because it represents the reaction against the Russian dominance, Democratic because within its ranks Conservatives and Republicans, Liberals and Socialists, fight shoulder by shoulder for the reign of law and order against anarchy and rapine.

## CHAPTER XV

### SHADOW ON SPAIN

CARDINAL NEWMAN distinguished between the notional assent to truth, the academic recognition of certain beliefs as valid, and the real assent which is inspired by personal experience. I knew before I crossed the frontier at Irun that the Reds had been guilty of wholesale atrocities, but I did not feel the Spanish horror in all its intensity until I had spent some days in Spain, days which transformed notional into real assent. The misery of those who have relations and friends behind the Red lines infected the very air that one breathed. Spaniards do not overwhelm one with atrocity stories. The evil thing is all but taboo as a subject for conversation. They could not retain their sanity if they allowed their minds to dwell on these things. They will talk of material destruction readily enough but not of spiritual tragedies.

I remember a charming and cultured man of fifty-three who had been educated at Stonyhurst and who asked eagerly after England which he loved. I was grateful, for Spaniards to-day have little reason to love my country. I mentioned Merida which I had just left, and he said, "I had a house there. The Reds destroyed it." And then he paused. I asked him if any of his relations had been captured by the Reds. "Well, as



you ask," he said, "I'll tell you. They caught my cousin, a gallant boy of nineteen." He described in a few words the way in which that boy was killed. It was not a nice death. And after a pause he added, "By the way, it's Boat Race day, did you know? They tell me Oxford has a good chance to win. I'll try to listen in this evening to the British wireless." And the boy who had died was never referred to again.

The shadow of evil darkens Spain to-day. It is inescapable. One senses it in the air one breathes. The Easter processions at Seville, in peace a pageant which draws thousands of tourists, have resumed their authentic penitential character. My friend's wife was walking barefoot in the procession as an act of gratitude to Our Lady for the fact that her boy had not yet been killed. A woman just behind me was describing, so my companion afterwards told me, the escape of her mother, an old woman of seventy-five, who had walked seventy miles and crossed the frontier hills at night. She had just telegraphed announcing her arrival in France. Old ladies do not do this sort of thing merely to escape from the possibility of being interned in those model prisons which the Duchess of Atholl admired during her recent visit to Spain.

A Spaniard in the Air Force whom I met in my travels told me that parachutes had saved far more lives of airmen who had not crashed than of those who had.

"Some of our men have returned to our lines with parachutes riddled with bullets. We wear them strapped on our backs. A parachute is fine so long as you don't use it for what it is intended. I had rather crash without one than land behind the Red lines. Of course, there's always the chance of escape.

One of our men pretended to be a Russian, gave the Communist salute, wandered off without being molested, and swam a river back to our lines. Another chap who was away four days and nights, crawled in with his feet cut to ribbons. The last man they caught was sorry his parachute had opened."

He added in a detached voice, "They say there's a limit to pain, and that beyond a certain point one doesn't feel anything," and I knew that every time his engine missed a bit over the enemy lines he nerved himself with some such thought as this.

I have not repeated the story of his friend's death because I have not been able to corroborate it. I do not know whether it was true but I know that he believed it to be true, and it is the belief in such things which is responsible for the shadow over Spain to-day.

It is reassuring to remember that the worst atrocities were in the earlier period, and even in those days the firing squad was the normal fate of a prisoner. To-day things have so far improved that a captured officer can count with confidence on being shot.

The lower ranks have normally nothing worse to fear than imprisonment, but there are exceptions. The correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* claims that there are many desertions in the Cordova sector, and tells us that the deserters are sent to a base where they are cross-examined. "If they are found to be former *Guardia Civil* or members of any 'reactionary,' 'Monarchist,' or, generally speaking, 'Fascist' organisation they are shot. But if they are 'anti-Fascist,' as they nearly always are, they get a month's leave with pay and are then sent up to the line."

## CHAPTER XVI

### GRANADA TO MALAGA

**R**ANDOLPH CHURCHILL and I left Seville after lunch on Good Friday to visit Granada and Malaga. I was glad that we made a late start and arrived after sunset. I shall never forget the shadow of the towers of the Alhambra against the soft background of moonlit sierra snows.

I do not propose to inflict upon the reader a detailed description of the Alhambra, or even to discuss the denigration of the Spaniard at the expense of the Moor which has always been popular with the sort of people who are so shocked to-day that Franco should ally himself with descendants of those Moors whose contributions to Spanish culture have been so grossly exaggerated.

The Moor has magnificent qualities ; he will follow to the death any leader who can command his respect, be that leader a Moor, or as in Spain to-day, a Spaniard ; but the true Arab is no friend of culture. The Arab is a nomad by temperament, and culture is only possible when the nomad consents to adopt the more settled life of the agricultural community.

“ If there was an Arab-Spanish civilisation,” writes Louis Bertrand in his *History of Spain*, “ it was especially to the Spaniards—Christians, Jews, and renegades—that this civilisation was due.”

I wish that I had read *Death in the Morning* before I visited Granada. Helen Nicholson, the author, is an American by birth who has regained her American nationality after the death of her German husband. The book contains a terrible description of the incessant bombing to which Granada was subjected, and the tragic story of a friend of hers who was killed by a bomb in the patio of the hotel Washington Irving where we stayed.

"In all that scene of horror and desolation the figure that stands out most clearly in my mind is that of Solita's young sister-in-law, Encarna. She was standing quite still, her face whiter than chalk, her dress splashed with blood, and a wild, fixed smile on her lips that will haunt me until I die."

That is one side of war, but there is another side.

"Those weeks of siege, when we all carried our lives in our hands, gave me something to remember, after all—something worth remembering. I think I can understand now what always used to puzzle me—why most men actually enjoy war with all its hardships and horrors, all its dangers and sordidness. Living dangerously makes life more real, more vivid, gives it a deeper meaning. And those who have lived—really lived, in this way—are not afraid to die. To some people war can be a spiritual experience."

*Death in the Morning* deserves to be read for many reasons. The author loves and understands the Spaniards, and interprets with great sympathy and intuition the spirit of Nationalist Spain. The book, indeed, is distinguished both by beauty and by balance, and it will be read with delight by all those who love Spain.

From Granada we drove to Malaga where we lunched. Just opposite our hotel was a house which had been burned by the Reds. Its walls were standing. A few doors further down the street was a house which had been struck by a bomb. The walls had collapsed, and little remained but the ruins.

Churchill and I paid a visit to the British Club where the ritual of the Englishman abroad was being scrupulously maintained. Most of the members were playing bridge. Others were having tea.

The Malaga terror had produced its "Scarlet Pimpernel," an anarchist sickened by the excesses of his colleagues. In the new rôle which followed this revulsion of feeling he rescued many men and women from murder. He performed miracles of reckless courage, and rowed many a hunted "White" under cover of the darkness to ships out at sea.

When Malaga was captured he retired into hiding, for like St. Paul, he had been a persecutor before his conversion. A friend at the British Club asked me to do what I could to procure a guarantee for his safety if and when he emerged from his refuge.

On my return to Seville I heard that the Duke of Alba had arrived. One of my greatest disappointments was the fact that I just missed a visit to his historic palace in Madrid, a museum of art treasures which was reported in the Press to have been destroyed by an air raid, but which is now alleged to have been gutted by the Madrid forces. The Duke had invited me to lecture in Madrid, and I was on the point of leaving London when he telegraphed me to postpone my visit owing to the unsettled conditions in Spain.

I stated the case for the "Scarlet Pimpernel" and he replied that if the facts were as reported the man had

nothing to fear. On the other hand, if he had alternately murdered and accepted bribes to rescue other victims, he was well advised to remain in hiding.

The Duke gave me some excellent advice as to the best procedure to follow, which I communicated to my friend at Malaga with the happiest of results, for I have since heard that the "Scarlet Pimpernel" has emerged from hiding and has been granted a free pardon.

On my return to England I picked up one of the monthly reviews from which I learned that a washer-woman in Malaga had been executed by the Nationalists for the crime of washing the linen of the Reds. I at once wrote to a friend of mine who was half English, and whose mother, a British subject, lived at Malaga. I asked for news of the martyred washer-woman, and he replied, "The story is, of course, absurd. Indeed, we would have warmly thanked any washer-woman who had washed not only the linen of the Reds but the Reds themselves." His mother's house had been pillaged and left in a condition of indescribable filth. It was the work of days to clean up the cathedral which stank like a sewer when the Nationalists entered the town.

For a vivid account of Malaga during the Red terror I recommend to the reader *My Fill of Days* by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell,<sup>1</sup> whose political sympathies are with the extreme Reds. He gives an honest and objective account of the unending assassinations in Malaga during the period which he describes.

"Unfortunately the Camine Nuove," he writes, "which was well in sight of my garden, was often selected for these murders."

Sir Peter is a brave man. He sheltered several

<sup>1</sup> Faber and Faber.

Spaniards of the Right who owe their lives to his courage. In the hectic and anarchic atmosphere of Malaga during the Terror, an Englishman, whatever his political sympathies, who protected refugees of the Right, ran the gravest of personal risks.

## CHAPTER XVII

### MEETING IN SEVILLE

**I** SPENT my last night in Spain with a great friend. Both at Burgos and at Salamanca I had tried to get into touch with Alvaro and failed. I was all the more overjoyed when I ran into him by accident in the Andalusia Hotel at Seville.

I first met Alvaro and his two brothers, Alonso and Ataulfo at Mürren. Never have I known more fanatic skiers. The three brothers entered as a team representing the Kandahar Ski Club in the Parsenn-Derby, and competing against some of the finest professional racers in the world, finished second out of twelve teams. Alvaro and Alonso represented Spain in the World Ski Championship at Mürren in 1935. The Mürren kurverein, with the best intentions in the world, welcomed them with the Spanish Republican flag, but the flag which the Alcazar flew was soon hoisted above the hotel where Alvaro and Alonso were staying.

"Alonso and I came out to Spain together," said Alvaro, "and we read your British Ski Year Book on the journey. We often talk of the banquet after the Championship meeting, and of a remark you made in your speech . . . something to the effect that you hoped that Spain would soon expel an enemy less chivalrous and far more dangerous than the Moors."



This was in 1935. Those of us who were following events in Spain knew that the 1934 revolt of the Asturian miners was intended by Moscow as a rehearsal for a revolution.

"Alonso," continued Alvaro, "had a queer sense of impending doom on the journey to Spain. He didn't talk much, but I think he knew. The day he was killed he put his watch and his money and his other small possessions in a packet and wrapped them up very carefully. He took off just after I did, and for a time we flew side by side. I waved to him, but he did not wave back. He gave me a queer, odd look.

"Alonso was not piloting the machine ; he was the observer. The weather was foul, a dense cloud and rain. Alonso's plane disappeared into the mist, and a few minutes later crashed against a mountain side."

I made the usual futile noises which one makes when one tries to express sympathy. I was very fond of Alonso.

A few weeks after his death I was watching an international ski race with my friend Othmar Gurtner. The Italians were doing well.

"The Latins are going to beat us all at ski-ing," said Gurtner, "just as they do in motor racing. Their time reaction is quicker. Do you remember Alonso?"

I knew what he meant. Alonso had the Latin recklessness. With a little more training he might have been a world beater.

Alvaro spoke very warmly of the Italian flyers. Their machines were not as good as the Russians', but they brought down more planes than any airmen on either side. Their time reactions, as Othmar Gurtner remarked, are particularly rapid.

We dined together, and towards midnight I went up

to my room and Alvaro came with me. He threw open the window.

We could hear an approaching aeroplane. There was a low ceiling of cloud, and the aeroplane was trying to land. The aerodrome was sending up rockets, but they scarcely penetrated through the clouds. Again and again the aeroplane approached, tried to locate the aerodrome, circled round and then again retreated.

"Ataulfo may be in that aeroplane," said Alvaro anxiously. "Poor devil! I know just what the pilot's feeling. He can't see a damned thing, and he's cursing the aerodrome for not showing more lights."

Once again the aeroplane approached.

"I hope he makes it," said Alvaro. "He's having a shot at it. He's coming down. Good. He's landed."

It was not the charm of my society which kept Alvaro in my room until two in the morning. It was the fact that I represented a link with the things which he loved, with the clean battles of the snows, with the mountains . . . with peace. And when he turned to say good-bye I felt a sense of humiliating dereliction. He was returning to the Front, and I was going back to England, to comfort and to security.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### JOURNEY'S END

I SPENT a day in Gibraltar before leaving for England. I called on the Roman Catholic Bishop of Gibraltar who had been in close contact with the Spanish tragedy. Refugees have been pouring into Gibraltar from Spain.

"Only yesterday we received a party of nuns who had escaped on a British battleship. I assure you, Mr. Lunn, I have supped every night with horrors. But when I spoke of these things to a party of my Anglican friends who were having tea with me the other day, they dismissed them all as 'mere propaganda.' I only wish I could agree with them."

I am writing these lines in the early morning, and a persistent thrush has deflected my attention from my typewriter. Through the open windows I have just glanced at the roses in our garden. It is all very beautiful, and yet this tranquil loveliness is curiously unsatisfying. My feelings are disconcertingly like those which Helen Nicholson felt on her return to England :

"But in spite of this comfortable feeling of security, I was already homesick for Granada, as I have been ever since. Even after Asta and Alfonso joined me, months later, this ache of longing persisted, and I have walked along Piccadilly in the December gloom and

mist, seeing only a beleaguered, sunbaked town, with the high mountains standing all about, secret and fateful ; and the gay legionaries lounging in the cafés, or swinging along the streets in pairs. At times, in some crowded room, a whiff of perfume has brought back the scented, starlit nights, with the lorries full of tired soldiers rattling through the town after a battle, crying : ' Viva España ! ' ”

Nostalgia takes many forms. I never see the spire of Harrow church without remembering the desolation of the return to Harrow from the mountains. And there is a street in a Middle-Western town which will always be associated in my mind with the memory of an evening when I emerged into the horrors of standardized architecture from an Italian film which had awoken memories of Romanesque campaniles set against the immensities of Maggiore's blue.

But the longing for the Alps and for Italy is more tolerable than the nostalgia for wartime Spain. I shall enjoy England again when peace returns, but at the moment I am only conscious of the contrast between the soporific security of the English air and the austere climate of heroic Spain, a climate whose first impact I felt when I crossed the international bridge at Hendaye. I had nothing to declare but my love for Spain when I entered the Customs at Irun, and I had nothing to surrender save my heart as I passed the frontier guards at Algeciras. And one day I shall return and claim it.

“ Heroic Spain.” How this phrase will grate upon those who are the products of that degenerate humanism which insists that our supreme concern in life must be to pass through the world as comfortably and as painlessly as possible. Praise of physical courage is distasteful

to a certain type of pacifist. But it is not necessary to sacrifice truth on the altar of peace or to belittle heroism merely because one believes that the evils of war outweigh its redeeming features. Nor will pacifists of this school—and there are other schools—ever succeed in destroying respect for military virtue which is as old as man and which will endure so long as man endures. Indeed this particular form of pacifism is already a little dated. It is the mood of a passing moment. The Immortals never date, and Shakespeare speaks to our age no less than to his in the closing scene of *Macbeth*.

*Ross.* Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt :  
He only lived but till he was a man ;  
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd.  
In the unshrinking station where he fought,  
But like a man he died.

*Siward.* Then he is dead ?

*Ross.* Ay, and brought off the field : your cause of  
sorrow  
Must not be measured by his worth, for then  
It hath no end.

*Siward.* Had he his hurts before ?

*Ross.* Ay, on the front.

*Siward.* Why then, God's soldier be he !  
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,  
I would not wish them to a fairer death :

There are many Siwards in Nationalist Spain, parents whose stoic acceptance of sacrifice is as impressive as the courage of their sons in the front rank. Characteristic of this spirit is the well-known story of the Carlist

widow of whose three sons two enlisted in the first hour of the war. The third, a boy of sixteen, not unnaturally assumed that he was too young. That evening when he came down to supper he saw that only one place had been laid. "I don't lay places for cowards," said his mother. The boy enlisted next day.

It was men born of mothers such as this that held the Alcazar and continued to hold the Alcazar long after the world believed them to be doomed. "Thinkest thou that all my suns are set?" That was their answer to the world, an answer which Theocritus anticipated long ago, for Theocritus, like Shakespeare, interprets not the mood of a moment, but the enduring things which even "Progress" cannot wholly destroy.

The thrush has stopped singing, and distant echoes of *Arriba España* come to me on the breezes of memory. My mind eludes the officials of the non-intervention committee and I am back again in a little garden at Pozuelo among flower beds where violets dispute the desolation of war. And I see the deep gorge of the Tagus and women in mourning praying in Seville Cathedral and the sweep of Spanish hills and the towers of the Alhambra silhouetted against moonlit snows, and young men going up into the line, and the sadness in the eyes of those whose sons will not return.

They will tell you many things, these Spaniards whom you meet behind the lines, but the ultimate secret they cannot tell, for, as Henry James somewhere says, "Things which involve risk are like the Christian faith. They must be seen from the inside."

**PART II**  
**THE ARGUMENT**





## CHAPTER I

### THE USE AND ABUSE OF LABELS

*Happy is the man who knows the value of research.*

EURIPIDES

I WAS recently asked to talk to a group of undergraduates at the University of London. In the course of my remarks I quoted from Andrew Smith's book *I Was a Soviet Worker*. Smith was a convinced Communist who gave his life savings to the Communist Party and set sail from America for the Promised Land. After working for three years in Soviet Russia he returned to tell his fellow Communists that Russia treats her workers worse than Capitalist countries treat their dogs.

When I had finished, a young Communist arose and put a question.

"Are you aware," he asked, "that Smith is a Trotskyite?"

I asked him if he could produce any evidence in support of this theory. He could produce no evidence. Smith, he implied, must be a Trotskyite because he had dared to criticize Soviet Russia.

I suggested that the point at issue was not whether Smith was a Trotskyite but whether Smith's statements could be disproved. This shocked him.

A subsequent speaker made an interesting point

which weakened the force of an argument which I had used, thus illustrating the fact that a lecturer who invites questions seldom leaves the lecture hall without acquiring information. As I came out of the room in which I had been talking I found the young Communist surrounded by a group of friends to whom he was indignantly denouncing my bourgeois ideology. He snarled at me as I approached and said, "Anyhow, that man at the back of the hall stumped you with his question."

But why "stumped?" The man at the back of the hall had told me something which I did not know. I cannot see why I should resent acquiring information. At forty-nine one is, of course, less perturbed than at twenty-two by the discovery that one is not infallible, and more grateful to those who add to one's small stock of knowledge. All of which I tried to explain, but without effect.

This young Communist was a characteristic product of an age in which the flight from reason is developing into a rout. He was not interested in truth except in so far as truth could be exploited in the interests of Communism. Facts were only of value in so far as they fitted into his own particular creed.

In the concluding paragraphs of that entertaining book, *The Testament of Joad*, Mr. Joad satirizes not only himself but the prevailing tendency of this age which my young Communist friend exemplified in his attitude. After analysing the Rhine experiments in telepathy Mr. Joad explains that the new facts discovered by Rhine fit very conveniently into the Jodian philosophy.

"The fit is perfect, but then if they had not fitted

I should not have been disposed to attach much importance to them."

The literal translation of the Greek word *zetesis* is "seeking," and a philosophy of life is crystallized in this word, that eager curiosity which is characteristically Hellenic. There is little of this Greek spirit in the modern world. Slogans and labels are our modern substitutes for intellectual curiosity. "Smith is a Trotskyite." So much for Smith. No need to read his book or to meet his arguments. Russian Smiths are liquidated by bullets, American Smiths by labels. Words which should stimulate thought are degenerating into labels to save people from the necessity of thinking. And no word is more useful for this soporific purpose than "Fascist."

If you object to dictatorship in Russia you are a Fascist. If you criticize certain aspects of democracy in England you are a Fascist. If you disapprove of that régime of terror which followed the institution of the Popular Front in Spain, you are a Fascist. If you hope for friendlier relations with Italy, if you resent the mischievous activities of our pacifist warmongers, if you are not prepared for your son to die for Geneva, you are a Fascist.

And if you are a Fascist nobody need bother any further with your views or your arguments.

Perhaps the most popular thought-saving labels are the words "progressive" and "reactionary." No labels could be sillier. If I have taken the wrong turning, it is foolish to progress any further in the wrong direction. On the contrary, I should react towards the cross-roads where I went wrong. Roosevelt is often described as a progressive. On the contrary, he is a reactionary, reacting from the great heresy of

economic Liberalism—the heresy that moral values must be subordinated to economic law. He is reacting to the mediæval view that economics should be subordinate to human welfare.

Labels are valuable in so far as they help to clarify thought, pernicious in so far as they are accepted as substitutes for thought. To paste such labels as “Fascist,” “Communist,” or “Democratic” over the map of Europe is a silly waste of time. Never has Europe been more interesting to those who make some effort to understand the springs of political action. Intellectual curiosity makes for happiness, intellectual incuriosity for boredom. Russia, Italy and Germany are laboratories where experiments are being carried out which will change the face of the world, and few of those who talk so glibly of Fascism or Communism seem concerned to discover what is happening inside those laboratories.

I do not know which is the more tiresome, uncritical abuse of Communism by rich people who fear, and are right to fear, that Communism will make them poorer, or the uncritical praise of Communism by the poor who believe, and who are mistaken in believing, that Communism will make them richer. Among those who are noisiest in their denunciation of Communism or loudest in their praise, how few have read Marx, and how few could, if challenged, give a summary of what Marx meant by dialectical materialism. And yet surely some knowledge of the philosophy, economics and history of Communism should be regarded as an integral part of modern education. The literature for which Communism is responsible is absorbingly interesting, ranging as it does from the theoretical appreciations and criticisms by writers such as Strachey

and Dawson, Laski and Berdyaev, Trotsky and Gurian, to accounts of first-hand experience from authors such as Hindus, Andrew Smith, Pares, Lyall, Wicksteed, E. M. Delafield and many others.

Communism owes its vitality to its gospel of deliverance for the dispossessed. "Thou hast put down the mighty from their seats and hast exalted the humble and meek." Those words have crystallized the inspiration behind all revolutions, and certainly Communism in its earlier phases professed to give a new dignity and a new status to the common man. But even those who believe, as I do, that Russia is to-day governed by a clique of terrified terrorists, and that the lot of the common man is far worse in modern Russia than in Czarist Russia, are not absolved by this belief from the intellectual duty of attempting to understand one of the most interesting experiments in the modern world. Russia, as Professor Laski somewhere remarks, is the most exciting country in modern Europe, so exciting that Professor Laski is well advised to stay where he is.

But Russia is not the only country in which interesting experiments are being made. Germany has something to teach us, and yet when our Ambassador in Berlin hinted in his inaugural speech that he had something to learn from Germany, our insular Labourites exploded with noisy indignation, and repudiated with scorn the suggestion that "our great democracy" had anything to learn from dictators, excepting always, of course, from Russian dictators.

No word is more abused in the modern world than "democracy," and those for whom the very word is a soothing incantation tacitly assume that democracy needs no definition. The literal meaning of the word

is "power of the people," but this does not take us very far. If a Government is democratic merely because it rests on "the power of the people," and enjoys the support of the majority of its citizens, Italian Fascism is democratic whereas the Spanish Popular Front never was. Mussolini, as an anti-Fascist Italian sadly remarked to me, still commands the confidence of the overwhelming majority of Italians, whereas the Spanish Popular Front polled nearly half a million less votes at the elections than the Opposition.

If democracy means the government of the people by the people for the people, Periclean Athens was democratic if you accept the Athenian view that neither women nor slaves should play a part in public affairs, for the Athenian citizen did not elect a legislator to represent him, but voted in person on all political and financial measures. Great Britain, on the other hand, is not governed *by* the people but by representatives of the people, a very different matter. In Latin countries democracy is too often government of the people by the politicians for the politicians.

Democracy need not necessarily mean Parliamentary Government on a territorial basis, for a democratic Parliament might equally well be elected not by counties and by boroughs but by professions and trades. Whatever be our definition of democracy, nothing could be more fatuous than to assume that a majority has a divine right to do precisely what it pleases. The success of democratic government depends far less on the machinery of election than on the spirit in which the elected interpret their mandate, and the respect which the majority shows for the rights of minorities.

Democracy has been a success in Great Britain

because British democracy is permeated with the spirit of fair play. The recent proposal to pay the Leader of the Opposition £2,000 a year does not seem unreasonable to those who believe that the success of the Parliamentary system depends on an effective and critical Opposition. Under the rule of the Popular Front in Spain, members of the Opposition were threatened with assassination, and their leader was murdered by the police. Where respect for minorities disappears, democracy is doomed, as that great democrat, Abraham Lincoln, fully realized. "Our progress in degeneracy," he said, "appears to be pretty rapid. As a nation we began by declaring that all men are created equal except negroes. When the know-nothings get control, it will read all men are created equal, except negroes and foreigners and Catholics. When it comes to this, I shall prefer emigration to some country where they make no pretence of loving liberty—to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, without the base alloy of hypocrisy."

"That is the position to-day," comments Mr. Arthur Bryant in *The Observer*,<sup>1</sup> "of many Spanish Liberals now fighting for Franco, who found that the practical interpretation of Spanish democracy involved the denial of liberty to all but Communists and Anarchists. In Red Spain to-day minorities have no rights—not even to exist."

"To demand a crusade in the name of democracy to defend the rights of a Spanish faction to annihilate its opponents is to bring real democracy into ridicule. Even if that faction represented a majority of the Spanish people, which it does not, a constitutional

<sup>1</sup> July 11, 1937.

country like Britain can have no interest in defending cruelty or crime. A brutal act is not made any the more excusable because it is committed by a majority. To allege that it is, is to claim the same kind of divinity for a mob as used to be claimed for Kings, and in several countries to-day—including Soviet Russia—is claimed for dictators. Democracy is not the divine right of Kings standing on its head.

“I know there are many who believe that, because such a country as Spain was misgoverned in the past, the reign of terror that has rendered that part of it subject to the so-called rule of Valencia a shambles does not matter. It is merely, so it is argued, a passing phase. The burning of a nun in petrol or the sawing off of a Conservative tradesman’s legs—the common-places of ‘democratic’ Spain for many blood-stained months—are merely the high-spirited antics of a young and exuberant democracy; the first fine careless rapture of a popular crusade for freedom; a necessary stage in the course of evolutionary progress.

“But however trivial these excesses may seem in the cold detachment of the philosopher’s study in the security of an ordered land where such things are impossible, their effect in practice is not to advance the evolution of a nation towards democracy but to retard it. For, leaving aside the sickening cruelty and suffering involved in the Marxian ‘blood-bath,’ its result, as has been proved in every Western community where it has been applied, is to provoke a violent reaction against everything that in time might create a real democracy. Faced by the despotism of the local mob—of all that is basest and most degraded in human nature and society—the ordinary, decent citizen surrenders his legitimate freedom in despair to



the first strong man who is able to restore public order. Anarchy, which our short-sighted publicists of the unthinking Left have invested with the great and honourable name of democracy, is the rock on which the very idea of democracy shipwrecks."

## CHAPTER II

### AN OUTLINE OF COMMUNIST TACTICS

**M**ADRID to-day, according to *The Times* correspondent,<sup>1</sup> is the biggest experiment that Communism has ever raised in the West. And the correspondent might have added that the Spanish War is necessarily incomprehensible to those who have never studied Communist methods and tactics in Soviet Russia.

Space only permits the briefest outline of Communist methods, but some such outline is essential for an understanding of the Spanish War. This chapter is intended to serve not as a substitute for, but as a stimulous to research, for Communism thrives on the apathy and indifference of those who have most to fear from a Red revolution.

Red is a fashionable colour in modern England, and it is easier to refute arguments than to fight fashion, but all those who are determined that the Spanish tragedy shall not be re-enacted in England are under a very special obligation to study Communism and to arm themselves with the facts that refute Red fictions. Communists are creating cells in every regiment, trade, club and university, and unless we are equally active and equally alert their ambitions may yet be realised.

<sup>1</sup> November 21st, 1936.

I am always meeting people who tell me that they have no time to read. I find this difficult to believe, but even those who have little leisure could afford the time to read one book on this subject. The book that I would select for these over-driven victims of modern civilization is short and inexpensive. *The Communist Attack on Great Britain* by G. M. Godden (1/6) is an admirably documented survey of the subversive movement which lacks neither funds, brilliant generalship nor devoted disciples.<sup>1</sup> If this book could be distributed by the hundred thousand, Communism would cease to be a menace to Great Britain.

I was recently challenged, as I have remarked elsewhere in this book, by the Birkenhead Communists to meet their champion in debate. I accepted the challenge subject to the proviso that their champion should be accredited by the Communist Party of Great Britain as a representative competent to defend their policy on the public platform. I was not in the least surprised to discover that this proviso was not acceptable. The chiefs of the British Communist Party are wiser than the rank and file. They know that it is impossible for a Communist to emerge with success from a debate in which he dare not defend, and cannot disavow, the official policy of his Party. Communism is rotten with intellectual dishonesty, for Communists are instructed to preach, for tactical reasons, a policy which they will disavow when the moment comes to strike. They preach peace while preparing for war.

"The Communist Party of Great Britain," to quote from its Rules, "is a section of the Communist Inter-

<sup>1</sup> Those who wish to keep in touch with the ever changing developments of modern Russia should subscribe to *Contemporary Russia*, edited by Lancelot Lawton, and published at 92 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

national and is bound by its decisions." The point is important, for British Communists often attempt, for tactical reasons, to suggest that British Communism is very different from the Russian model.

Every British Communist is the agent of a foreign power whose avowed and declared object is the fomenting of civil strife. It is the duty of British Communists to form revolutionary cells in every regiment and in every unit of the Fleet. The Communists insist that revolution is impossible unless the armed forces can be persuaded to join the workers in revolt. At an anti-War Conference held in London in March 1933, at which representatives of twenty-four societies were present, the delegates were informed that the procedure in the event of war was to be "not a strike but for the workers to take the rifles thrust into their hands and turn them upon their officers."

Terrorism is the official policy of the Communists in the penultimate phase before the outbreak of revolution, as for instance during the Red terror in Spain under the Popular Front, and in the period during which the Revolutionary Government is consolidating its power. Lenin, in the course of drafting the Soviet Penal Code, declared that "the legal trial is not intended to replace terrorism . . . but to base terrorism firmly on a fundamental principle."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Walter Duranty, who affects an attitude of genial neutrality so far as Communism is concerned, obtained a copy of an official treatise on Terrorism, and in his book *I Write As I Please*,<sup>2</sup> he summarizes the principles defined in this treatise. "Action must be ruthless and above all swift. . . . Secrecy was also

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *The Bolshevik*, October 31st, 1930.

<sup>2</sup> Page 187.

stressed because that, too, was an element of terror."

On the night of the attempt on Lenin's life, five hundred people were executed without trial not because they were involved in the plot but because they were class enemies whose execution would strike terror in the enemies of the Soviet régime. Mr. Duranty quotes from a history of the Communist Party by Popov. "The system of mass Red terror proved a weapon of tremendous importance." It did indeed, in Spain no less than in Russia.

A striking illustration of "mass Red terror" was the deliberate liquidation of the recalcitrant peasants of the Ukraine. "Obsolete classes," Stalin told Mr. H. G. Wells, "do not voluntarily disappear." When the peasants resisted collective farming he sent Government grain collectors to seize the small share of the crops which they had saved for their own use. By this act he condemned millions to death as surely as if he had condemned them to be shot. The number of peasants who died of starvation has been estimated by Mr. W. H. Chamberlin (*Russia's Iron Age*) at five million.

There is one easy method of reducing Communist hecklers to sulky silence—ask them if they are prepared to defend capital punishment for children. The death penalty was abolished for a brief period at the beginning of the Revolution; the qualifying age for the now restored death penalty has been lowered to twelve, and theft is included among capital offences.

Max Eastman, an old Marxian Communist, contributed to *Harper's Magazine* in February 1937 an article on *The End of Socialism in Russia* in which he writes, "In the spring of 1935 Stalin's government issued a decree which made the death penalty for

theft—adopted for adults three years before—applicable to minors from the age of twelve. When this fact was announced at a congress of the French Teachers' Federation in August of the same year, the Stalinists in the Federation indignantly denied it. Being shown a copy of *Izvestia* (April 8th, 1935) containing the decree, they lapsed into silence, but they were ready next day with the information that 'under socialism children are so precocious and well educated that they are fully responsible for their acts'! It is but a reflection of the manner in which this ideology is being stretched to cover every saddest thing in Russia."

Is it surprising that the Birkenhead Communists were not encouraged to debate? British Communists have been sadly worried by the wholesale liquidation of the old Bolshevik guard. A young man in a Communist bookshop who mistook me for a sympathizer because I bought some Communist pamphlets remarked sadly, "These Russians make things so difficult for us." They do indeed.

"The list of those shot," writes Max Eastman, "or who shot themselves, or who were named as implicated with the victims comprises—with a single exception—every one of the eminent Bolsheviks who sat with Stalin around the council-table of Lenin:<sup>1</sup> Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Bukharin, Radek, Sokolnikov, Piatakov (mentioned in Lenin's Testament as among the ablest), Yevdokimov, Smirnov (once known as 'The Lenin of Siberia'), Tomskey (head of the Federation of Labour), Serebriakov (Stalin's pre-

<sup>1</sup> "The exception is Rakovsky, whose distinction is that he was the last of all to give up open opposition, and capitulate to Stalin's dictatorship, remaining in exile until 1933, and capitulating all too obviously in a sick if not a senile despair."

decessor as secretary of the party), and several others only a little less eminent."

There was only one Judas among the twelve apostles, but if Stalin is to be believed, there were ten Judases among the first twelve apostles of Communism. If St. Peter had liquidated as a traitor to Christianity every Apostle save one, it is probable that Christianity would not have survived.

But it is not only human beings who have been liquidated. The traditional culture of Christian Europe is regarded with venomous hatred by the Communists, and the intellectuals associated with that culture have been persecuted as ruthlessly as the rich and the aristocratic.

International culture, the ideals of humanism, freedom of thought and freedom for research, have been betrayed by our Left Wing intellectuals. They have been ready enough to protest against oppression in Germany and Italy, but their sense of international solidarity has disappeared in face of the persecution in Soviet Russia. With a few honourable exceptions our Left Wing intellectuals remain silent, and condone by their silence the ruthless onslaught upon the intellectual life of a great people.

"To wipe out the intellectuals as a class," writes the author of *I Escape from the Soviet*, the wife of a distinguished Russian scientist, Tchernavin, "it was necessary to get hold not only of the men but of the women as well, and, incidentally of their children."

In a letter to *The Times* on April 24th 1933 Sir Bernard Pares, Professor of Russian at the University of London, wrote as follows: "There is no doubt whatever as to the accuracy of Professor Tchernavin's account of his treatment in Russian prisons. He is a

distinguished ichthyologist, and has been able to supply us with details as to the fate of numerous scholars, some of them are known to me, and some with European reputations, of whom we had lost track. Of the fifty-one in his own branch of science known to himself, twenty-five have been shot and twenty-six deported in three years (1930-1932). Among those whom he knew personally or met in prison his list includes six academicians and thirty-six other professors in various fields or custodians of museums."

Every culture is the product of a philosophy. The culture of Christian Europe is the expression of the Christian belief in the infinite value of every human soul. "Proletculture" is the expression of Marxian materialism, the doctrine that there is no qualitative difference between men and machines, a doctrine which leads to the conclusion that the individual is an unimportant cog in the machinery of the state.

"The reading books for the children are mechanized, and are designed to fix the child's attention on representations of technical objects; there are no pictures of flowers, animals, or such 'bourgeoise idyllic' things. The mind of the child is to be directed to machinery. 'Processions of children,' wrote a visitor to Russia in October 1931, 'are seen marching with banners bearing inscriptions such as "Give us technical power!"' "1

Communism wages war on three fronts, economic, religious and cultural. "In 1926 the Communist authorities sent urgent instructions to one hundred and twenty libraries in Leningrad to destroy all volumes

<sup>1</sup> *The Communist Attack on Great Britain* by G. M. Godden, Burns, Oates and Washbourne, page 62.



of *belles-lettres* dating before 1917, which were out of harmony with Communist doctrine.”<sup>1</sup>

The destruction of the magnificent Oviedo Library in Spain in the course of the 1934 rebellion which the Communists subsidized with money and arms, was not a spontaneous act of unplanned violence, but a characteristic incident in the war between prolet-culture and European culture.

W. H. Chamberlin in *Russia's Iron Age* states that “Soviet intellectual life has been very much under the influence of two slogans : ‘Art on the Class Front,’ and the ‘*partiinost*’ (Party character) of science. . . . A journal entitled *For Marxist-Leninist Natural Science* blossomed forth with such slogans as ‘For Party Spirit in Mathematics,’ and ‘For Purity of Marxist-Leninist Theory in Surgery’.”

André Gide, once a Communist, has described in *Retour de l'U.S.S.R.* the destruction of culture in Russia. “I doubt,” he writes, “if in any other country to-day, such as Germany under Hitler, the spirit is less free, more terrorized.”

Proletculture wages relentless war on religion. Moscow is very clever in adapting its atheistic propaganda to the ideological level of the people whom it wishes to convert. It is still rather careful in Great Britain. I think the Dean of Canterbury would be interested if he could be induced to spend an hour in a certain museum at Rome in which anti-God literature and anti-God posters have been collected. Some of the foulest cartoons were destined for Barcelona, which is more progressive in this respect than London and Canterbury. The comic life of Christ, for instance, has not yet been translated into English, for the new

<sup>1</sup> Godden : op. cit., page 63.

Jerusalem of Moscow has not yet been built "in England's green and pleasant land." But the Red Dawn has appeared above the English horizon. *The Daily Worker* has already published in its "Children's Corner" blasphemous parodies of the Lord's Prayer, and the *Te Deum*. But no Left Wing teacher in our Board School has yet had the courage to imitate the frankness of one great Communist leader, the Ambassadors A. Kollontai, who wrote in 1922, "Immorality in the schools is making satisfactory progress."<sup>1</sup> Things are moving; though the attack on the traditional Christian morality is still concealed, the attack on the Christian creed is daily becoming less timid. Early in 1932 the University of London Union lent its hall for an exhibition of Soviet Education, including exhibits of five stages in the training of children in atheism. One of the exhibits was a caricature of the Deity "inscribed with the word 'God' so that there should be no mistake, with which hardly a printer in the world, outside the Union of Soviet and Socialist Republics, would foul his printing press."<sup>2</sup>

The violence of Communism in Germany and in Italy created Fascism. Communism was defeated in Hungary, and left nothing behind but the memory of the Red terror. Outside Russia Communism failed completely, though a doubtful exception might perhaps be made for Mexico.

The Seventh Annual Congress of the Third International, which was held in Moscow during July and August 1935, realized that the methods which had failed so signally would need to be revised. This

<sup>1</sup> Godden : op. cit., page 59.

<sup>2</sup> Godden : op. cit., page 49.

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Congress was described by Dimitrov as "the new tactical approach."

It was decided that the propaganda of terrorism should be held in reserve during the period of preparation for open revolution. Communists were to be encouraged to insinuate themselves into Christian Churches, Peace societies, athletic associations and youth movements. As Kuusinen puts it,<sup>1</sup> "Whom the Gods would destroy they must first make blind."

Significant are the following quotations from the Revolutionary programme. "Where there is no revolutionary upsurge, the Communist Party must advance by partial slogans." Again, "Outline non-revolutionary methods to win youth and take them over in Bolshevik fashion."

The policy which may be described as the policy of the Communist penumbra has developed with considerable success in the years following the Seventh Congress. The Communist penumbra consists of Socialists or advanced Radicals who are not members of the Communist Party, and who therefore provoke far less hostility than avowed Communists. A rapid increase in the numbers of the Communist Party is liable to provoke a Fascist reaction. The Communists therefore aim at creating a Communist nucleus surrounded by sympathetic allies who describe themselves as Socialists or Radicals. Their technique has proved of the greatest value to Spain, and has enabled many supporters of the Valencia Government to deceive perhaps themselves, and certainly public opinion, by the pretence that the strength of Spanish Communism may be measured by the number of its declared adherents. Lenin in his instructions for the founding

<sup>1</sup> *The Youth Movement*, p. 30.

of a Communist paper declared "We must in the beginning be very prudent. The paper must not be too revolutionary in the beginning. If you have three Editors at least one must be a non-Communist."<sup>1</sup>

*The Daily Worker* is an admirable example of overt undisguised propaganda. It is the official organ of British Communism, but perhaps less effective as propaganda than the numerous trade papers which constitute the Communist penumbra. Among these papers and cyclostyle sheets may be mentioned *Power*, the paper for electrical workers, *The Red Letter* for postal workers, *The Working Baker*, *The Furniture Worker*, *The Jogger* for clerks, *The Busman's Punch*, *The Railway Vigilant*, *The London Docker*, *The Seafarer*, etc. These papers are Communist in tendency, but they avoid the symbols of the workers' revolutionary Government, the hammer and sickle, and seldom contain open incitement to revolt.

Far the most successful invention of the Communist Party is the "Popular Front," which has been compared by Dimitrov to the Trojan Horse, which conceals the invaders until they are ready to capture the citadel of Democracy.

Fascism is intensely unpopular in the English-speaking world, in the United States no less than in Great Britain. Communists are therefore instructed to represent themselves as the supporters of democracy. The fear of war is universal; Communists must therefore pose as the friends of peace. Communists are the driving force behind "The League Against Fascism and War," which aims at enrolling all anti-Fascists and pacifists. The League could more properly be described as a league to promote Communism and

<sup>1</sup> *Lenin on Britain*, edition 1934, page 272.

Civil War. At the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress in 1932 the French Communist leader Marcel Cachon said, "You ask for our tactics. These are our tactics. Transforming imperialist war into civil war."<sup>1</sup>

"Collective security" means security for Russia to prepare "collective insecurity" for Great Britain and France. The Swiss, who are realists in these matters, have discovered that Litvinoff's slogan "Peace is indivisible" is being exploited to prepare for that "indivisible war" in which Europe may shortly be involved. If there be a country which has no aggressive designs against its neighbours, has everything to lose and nothing to gain from war, has consistently welcomed every Peace conference, and lavished hospitality on the prophets of Peace, that country is Switzerland. Why then did Switzerland decide at the eleventh hour to cancel her permission for the Anti-War Congress which ultimately met in Brussels, to meet at Geneva? Because the Swiss had come to the conclusion that these Congresses are exploited by Communists to promote not peace but war. The enemies of Mussolini and Hitler despair of a successful revolution from within, and are turning their thoughts to the possibilities which a European war might provide for overthrowing Fascism from without. Such were the reasons given in the influential Swiss paper, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* of Zürich, for a decision which on the surface appeared to be the reverse of the traditional policy of the Swiss Confederation.

In conclusion I cannot stress too strongly the danger of equating Communism with Russian Communism. Communism is collapsing in Russia, but it is being reborn in that Fourth International which accepts

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Worker*, August 30th, 1932.

Trotsky as its leader. And this Fourth International will wage a war as ruthless as its predecessor on the tradition and values of Christian civilization.

Meanwhile our own situation is precarious. Most of those to whom we entrust the education of our young are politically Left Wing. Many of them are avowed Communists. The attack on the Christian creed which is the foundation of that Christian culture which made England great is proceeding unchecked in Elementary and Secondary Schools and in the Universities. Unless the present tendency can be arrested the fruits of a false philosophy will prove to be no less bitter in this country than in Russia and in Spain.

## CHAPTER III

### COMMUNIST PREPARATIONS IN SPAIN, 1869-1932

PROPAGANDA is a recognized weapon of diplomacy, but Communist propaganda has certain special peculiarities which may be illustrated by the contrast between German and Russian methods in Spain. I have read with care *The Nazi Conspiracy in Spain*<sup>1</sup> which reproduces secret documents alleged to have been discovered in Red Spain after the outbreak of civil war. I am inclined to accept the documents as genuine in spite of the fact that the unnamed author exhibits a reckless indifference to truth in many of his comments on those documents. "The heroes of the Alcazar . . . dragged the wives and children of the Republicans into the cellars of the Alcazar . . . into every village and street that they captured the legions of General Franco not only brought the horrors of war, but after the battle they continued the slaughter and extermination of the civilian population with unexampled brutality." We know what to expect from a man who can write like this, and we can well understand that he prefers to remain anonymous. The facts, if they be facts, which the author cites, seldom lead to the conclusions which he seeks to establish. That German firms in Spain preferred to advertise in papers friendly to Germany

<sup>1</sup> Gollancz.

may well be true, but it is absurd to conclude that the papers in question were "in the service of National Socialism." Soviet Russia spends large sums of money in advertising products such as oil and petrol, and these advertisements seldom appear in papers which are uncompromisingly hostile to Russia, but it would be absurd to suggest that the papers in which they do appear are "in the service of Communism."

Let me begin by drawing a distinction which the author discreetly avoids, the distinction between different forms of national propaganda. Propaganda may be designed to influence the foreign policy of a state, and to ensure an alliance if possible, or at least the benevolent neutrality of the state, in the event of war. Diplomatic propaganda conducted by the great powers in Turkey and in the Balkans before the war was similar to most of the activities described in this book. In the event of a war between Germany and France, the attitude of Spain would be important, but it is difficult to understand why it should be more sinister for Germany than for France to desire the success of the political party in Spain most favourably disposed towards her.

Russian propaganda not only seeks to influence the policy of friendly states in its favour, and to secure their alliance in time of war, but also to provoke civil war within the borders of the state. Civil war is the method by which Russia hopes to transform foreign countries into units of that Soviet union of republics whose frontiers in the Utopian vision of Marx are coterminous with the limits of the habitable globe. For tactical reasons Stalin professes to have abandoned all hope of world revolution, but we are concerned in this chapter not with his present professions but with



the past effects of the Soviet policy, which has never really been revised.

The Germans are accused in this book of Nazi propaganda among the Arabs of French Morocco. If this charge could be proved, the Nazis would stand convicted of an act unfriendly to France, but the case against them in Spain would remain to be proved. Admittedly the Italians and the Germans helped Franco from the outset of the war, but there is no evidence in this book that they had long plotted a Fascist rising, or indeed that the rising itself had been planned by Franco many weeks before the opening of hostilities. What is certain is that Russian intervention in Spain antedates by many years this alleged Nazi conspiracy. Only a propagandist writing for the ignorant could pretend that peaceful democracy was the victim of an unprovoked Fascist attack. The well-informed correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* has no such illusions. "In a formal sense," he writes, "the rebellion started the civil war, but in a real sense it is very uncertain what came first, revolution or rebellion, though the rebellion certainly opened the civil war and precipitated full revolution. Whether there would have been full revolution if there had been no open rebellion is a question to which there can be no final answer."<sup>1</sup>

Spanish Marxism dates from 1869. A Marxist Manifesto was issued by the Madrid Section in 1869; and Spanish Marxists were organized as *autoritarios* in 1870. The Spanish Marxists exploited to the full opportunities for loot and arson which developed during the revolution of 1873. One of the founders of the first republic, Castelar, described the results of

<sup>1</sup> July 1st, 1937.

that luckless revolutionary experiment. "Daily riots, general strife and military indiscipline have everywhere been let loose. Our colleagues are being killed in the streets of towns that a short time ago were peaceful. . . . We have arson and murder at Alcoy, anarchy at Valencia, and brigandage in Sierra Morena. Murcia is in the hands of the demagogues and Castellon has fallen to the reactionaries. . . . The Spanish fleet alternately hoists a red flag and a foreign banner."

Limitations of space forbid me to describe in detail the development of Spanish Communism, but a few of the more important facts may be briefly summarized as follows.

In 1909 Spain suffered from a period of Syndicalist terrorism. Thirty-six churches were burned in Barcelona, railways were torn up and electrical and gas works were destroyed. In 1917 a revolutionary General Strike spread over Spain, a state of war was declared, and machine-guns swept the barricaded streets of Madrid and Barcelona. From 1919 to 1920 the fear of terrorists was so great that "it was practically impossible to obtain a verdict of guilty in any of the many trials for murder and manslaughter."<sup>1</sup> In 1920 the Spanish section of the Stalin party was constituted with 800 members. By April 1932 the membership had increased to 12,000, and the first "Youth Cell" had no less than 8000 members.

The first outstanding triumph of Communist propaganda was the revolution which led to the abdication of the King. Sir George Young, whose book *The New Spain* is the best study of Republican Spain by a writer of extreme Left Wing views, recognizes the merits of King Alfonso. "The King," he writes, adapting a

<sup>1</sup> *Spain To-day* by F. B. Deakin. Labour Publishing Co., pp. 96-7.

very old joke, "was a good king as kings go, and as good kings go, he went."

The King left after the Municipal Elections in which four-fifths of Spain voted Monarchist. "If you ask," writes Sir George Young, "why a reigning house and a ruling class should renounce the power they had held for time out of mind because Municipal Elections had given them a majority of only four to one, why, I can only refer you to previous pages for proof that in Spanish democracy you need not trouble to count noses to learn when the noes have it."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RED TAIL THAT WAGGED THE PINK DOG

**F**OR the history of Spain from 1931 to the outbreak of the civil war I recommend *The Spanish Republic* (Eyre and Spottiswoode) and *The New Spain* by Sir George Young,

Directly the King left the Red tail began to wag the pink dog. Churches were burnt, sculpture and paintings were destroyed, in that iconoclastic fury which was incited by Moscow. Constitutional guarantees were suppressed, and the freedom of the Press restricted at every turn.

What was the reaction of our Liberal Press to these attacks on Liberalism as it was once understood? Did they protest in the sacred name of democratic government against these abuses of democracy, or in the name of religious freedom against religious persecution? They did not. Silence appears to be golden when Moscow sins.

Within a year of the establishment of the Republic a cautious *Times* correspondent admits in a message from Madrid that "evidence continues to accumulate that the Spanish Republic is being made the victim of a vast conspiracy against law and order . . . in the background there is reason to believe the existence of clandestine and powerful forces."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, June 2nd, 1932.

In October 1932 the *Communist International*<sup>1</sup> announced that "Revolution is taking place in Spain, and at the present time the mass movement is seething and showing tendencies to develop into an armed revolt of the people."

On January 11th 1933 *The Times* correspondent wrote from Barcelona, "One of the outstanding leaders of the Communist movement here is Andres Nin, a Catalan, who was in Moscow as one of Trotsky's chief lieutenants, when Trotsky was in power there, and who has been his confidential agent here, preparing the groundwork for the possible triumph of Communism. In a recent statement to your correspondent Nin gave a clue to the working of the minds of all those bent upon bringing about a social revolution. He said: 'We began first with an educational campaign, and now we are engaged in organizing Workers' Soviets in anticipation of the crucial moment when the Workers must be the first to arrive on the scene and to seize power . . . we undertook to group the masses round the symbols of democracy, such symbols as they could understand, to give the masses illusions . . . we organized political juntas, which in Spain have a traditional significance, and *which at the right moment could be converted into Soviets.*'"

In September the first step towards a Popular Front was formed by the united front of Socialists and Communists. At a meeting in Madrid representatives of *both* parties "announced that only a Marxist régime would satisfy them."<sup>2</sup>

All informed students of Communism are well aware

<sup>1</sup> The *Communist International*, October, 1932. For a detailed study of Communist operations during this period I refer the reader to a pamphlet (price 2d.) entitled *Communist Operations in Spain* by G. M. Godden (Burns, Oates and Washbourne).

<sup>2</sup> *The Times*, September 17th, 1934.

that the policy of Moscow is to exploit not only the small nucleus of official Communists in such countries as Spain, but the large penumbra of Communist allies masquerading for tactical purposes under other names. The virtual identity of Socialists and Communists in Spain is proved by the declaration which I have just quoted.

Cabellero, Prime Minister of the Valencia Government at the beginning of the year, has never been an official Communist, but he takes his orders from Moscow, and this was his New Year's message to Soviet Russia : " The proletariat of Iberia will try to follow the example of your great country."

In October 1933 the General Election had resulted in the return of a Cortes in which the Right Wing and Centre controlled the majority. Within a year the Reds, who were in a minority, had risen in armed rebellion. The rebellion was quickly suppressed in Madrid, but in the Asturias the rebels were only overcome with considerable difficulty. Our Liberal Press which has been so disedified by the fact that the Nationalists have resorted to arms in their attempt to overthrow the Popular Front, was no less shocked by the determination of the Government in 1934 to suppress a rebellion.

Before the revolution broke out "opinion was genuinely alarmed when it was announced that a consignment of seventy cases of arms had been landed in Asturias."<sup>1</sup> In October 1934 the "first Soviet Republic in Spain" was set up in the Asturias under that name, and the currency which was circulated by the rebels was stamped with the hammer and sickle.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Spanish Tragedy* by E. Allison Peers, page 159.

<sup>2</sup> *Spain*, October, 1934. S.R.I., Paris.

The organ of the Communist International summed up the civil war in the Asturias in these words : " The Workers of Asturias fought for Soviet Power under the leadership of the Communists."<sup>1</sup>

Two years before a German or Italian aeroplane appeared in Spain, and two years before a single Italian or German volunteer landed on Spanish soil, a foreign state intervened in Spain. Russia incited a rebellion against the Republican Government, and yet the British Reds who have since protested so violently against German and Italian intervention, expressed their strong sympathy in 1934 not with the forces of order but with those who had appealed to arms against the constitutionally elected Government.

During the course of the rebellion characteristic acts of Communist vandalism resulted in the destruction of the world famous Camara Santo and the 40,000 volumes of the Oviedo University Library. Twenty-seven priests were murdered and one was burned alive. Left Wing intellectuals who were so distressed by the destruction of Guernica made no protest against the Oviedo atrocities.

The enquiring reader who is aware that the case against Franco is based on the alleged iniquity of appealing to force against a democratically elected Government, may be intrigued to discover how a Socialist defends the Asturian rising in 1934. He will find the answer to this question in *The Drama of Spain* by A. Ramos Oliveira, published by the National Council of Labour. Oliveira is the ex-editor of *El Socialista* the central organ of the Spanish Socialist Party.

<sup>1</sup> *The Communist International*, November 5th, 1934, English edition, page 807.

At the time of the rebellion the largest party in the Cortes was the party of the Popular Agrarians (114). The second largest party was that of the Radicals (72). Lerroux, the Premier, invited Gil Robles to enter a coalition Government. Oliveira makes no pretence that Lerroux acted in an unconstitutional fashion or that Gil Robles had not every right both to receive and to accept an invitation to join the coalition. To create prejudice he does not describe Gil Robles' party by its proper name, the Popular Agrarians, but by a name of his own invention, "the Clericals." In the eyes of a Spanish Socialist to attend Mass is to stamp oneself as a "clerical." "When three clerical ministers," writes Oliveira, "entered the Government with the Radical Party on October 5th 1934, the Revolution broke out." And the Revolution, we are informed, "gave an epic-heroic tone to Spanish Socialism."

I hope that the reader has followed the argument. An armed revolution against a democratically elected Government is "epic-heroic" when the revolution is fermented by Moscow. On the other hand, nothing could be more wicked than to attempt to overthrow by force a Government controlled by Communists.

The Right is always wrong ; the Left is always right. True democracy consists not in counting noses but in counting Red noses.

In 1936 the President Alcala Zamora dissolved the Cortes. Why ? Gil Robles, still the leader of by far the largest party in the Cortes, should, by every constitutional precedent, have been invited to form a Government when all other combinations had failed. Zamora, as we shall see, had no constitutional right to dissolve the Cortes without giving him this opportunity,



but as the entry into the Government of three members of Gil Robles' party in 1934 had provoked an armed revolt, the President dared not risk another insurrection. Oliveira remarks, "Zamora to avoid another popular rising, preferred to dissolve Cortes." Nothing could be more candid. The Communists, by the threat of another revolt, terrorized the President into acting in an unconstitutional fashion. Niceto Alcala Zamora, who brought the Popular Front into power by dissolving the Cortes, has described in the *Journal de Genève*, January 17th 1937, how the Popular Front obtained its majority.

"As to the first stage—as early as February 17th, and even from the late afternoon of the 16th—the Popular Front, without awaiting the final scrutiny or the proclamation of the results of the voting, which were to be given out on February 20th by the Provincial Commissions appointed for the purpose, launched its attack by starting disorder in the streets and using violence in demand of power.

"A Government crisis ensued, and the Civil Governors of several provinces resigned. At the urge of irresponsible agitators, *the mob seized the balloting papers with the result that false returns were sent in from many places.*"

The figures as officially given by the Spanish Government itself are :

Popular Front . . . . .	4,356,000
Parties of the Right . . . . .	4,570,000
Centre . . . . .	340,000

The first statement of seats in the Cortes gave the Popular Front 256 deputies and the Right and Centre 217 deputies. The Popular Front with half a million

less votes than its opponents had thirty-nine more deputies. But this majority was not sufficient to crush all opposition, and accordingly a Committee was set up to "verify the elections." Let ex-President Zamora describe the workings of this commission.

"Reinforced by such strange allies as the Basque revolutionaries, the Popular Front elected the committee entrusted with the task of verifying the elections in each constituency, a task the committee carried out in an arbitrary manner. In certain Provinces where the Opposition had been victorious, all the mandates were annulled, and candidates who were friendly to the Popular Front, *although they had been beaten*, were proclaimed deputies.

"Several members of minority groups were expelled from the Cortes. Nor was this done in blind party passion, but in execution of a deliberate plan conceived on a large scale. The end aimed at was two-fold—to *convert the Chamber into a packed Parliament by crushing all opposition, and to ensure the obedience of the more moderate group of the Popular Front*. As soon as the support of that group was no longer required, it became a mere puppet in the hands of the extremists."

As a result of this "verification" the Cortes took its final shape with 295 deputies for the Popular Front and 177 for the Right and Centre. The majority of 39 seats had been raised to 118.

Zamora, though he had dissolved the Cortes, at the pressure from the Left, was regarded with distrust by the extremists. Señor Oliveira tells us how Zamora was eliminated.

"The President of the Republic was dismissed from office by Parliament in accordance with Article 81 of the Constitution. The Spanish Constitution of 1931

establishes in the aforesaid Article that the President of the Republic will consider himself dismissed if the majority of the Chamber declares that the dissolution of the previous Cortes was not justified. The Cortes of the Popular Front agreed on this indirect vote of censure and Señor Alcalá Zamora abandoned the National Palace."

"Charming, is it not?" writes Mr. Reginald Dingle. "On the admission of Señor Oliveira his friends would have created a rising if poor Señor Zamora had not dissolved the Cortes. He tells us himself that 'it was necessary to replace the President of the Republic, who was guilty in great part for the unchaining of the Revolution in October 1934, which occurred because he gave entry to power to the Fascists.' There is probably no need to warn the reader that in this kind of literature 'Fascist' may mean anybody who wears a collar and tie. The point to be observed is that, by acting in a constitutional manner, the unfortunate President is guilty of 'unchaining a revolution.' Desirous of being 'guiltless of his country's blood' he then acts in an unconstitutional manner and is solemnly dismissed by the people under whose threats he acted. When revolt comes from the Right it must be placed on trial for it. When it comes from the Left, the Right must be placed on trial again—for 'unchaining a revolution'!"

After the election was over the nominal leaders of the Popular Front were soon put in their place. "How can we accomplish a revolution without shooting?" Lenin once exclaimed. "The victory of the proletariat," he insisted, "can only be achieved by rivers of blood." "Our programme," wrote *Pravda*, September 9th 1928, "is an all embracing and

blood-soaked reality." It is indeed—in Spain as in Russia.

On June 16th Gil Robles presented a balance sheet of "blood-soaked reality." One thousand two hundred and eighty-seven people had been injured, and 269 killed ; 160 churches had been totally destroyed and 251 had been partially destroyed. Ten newspaper offices had been destroyed, and sixty-nine premises of political and other associations. These outrages were communicated in detail to the Madrid Parliament on three occasions, once by Calvo Sotelo and once by Gil Robles. These statements were not denied. They were published in the official parliamentary records and in the public Press.

The tabulated outrages only include a proportion of those which were actually committed. One example will suffice. In Madrid the Reds spread a rumour that nuns were giving poisoned sweets to the children, and a French lady who unthinkingly gave some chocolate to a child was stoned to death.

What was the reaction of the great Liberal Press to these outrages ? Did it ask indignantly what Gladstone said about the Bulgarian atrocities ? Did it attempt to protest against this attempt to subvert constitutional Government by force ? Alas, no. The old Gladstonian tradition is dead in modern England.

Azana's Liberal and Democratic Government made no effort to arrest these outrages. The police were instructed not to interfere. They only sprang to action to arrest such citizens as were courageous enough to protect fellow-citizens from assault and churches from burning. The fire brigade were instructed to stand by to prevent fires spreading—from a church. To cry " Long live Spain ! " in public was to invite death.

Meanwhile the deputies of the Right continued to attend the Cortes and to plead for the restoration of law and order, a very provocative thing to do, it seems. "The Right," says Oliveira, "did all they could to maintain a situation of terrorism in the street." Read this sentence carefully. It is not a misprint. Robles, so Oliveira implies, was really very anxious that "the situation of terrorism" should continue because there was nothing that pleased him more than the assassination of his friends and the burning of churches. "Their method consisted," continues Oliveira, "in bringing the Government into disrepute by presenting it as incapable of maintaining order or guaranteeing the personal security of citizens."

Of course, these outrages provoked reprisals, a fact to which the Duchess of Atholl has several times drawn attention. The Duchess does not deny the epidemic of murder which provoked the Franco rising, and she does not realize that the inevitable reprisals, of which there were very few, weaken rather than strengthen her case. A Government which is powerless to maintain order, and which can neither prevent outrages from the Left nor reprisals from the Right, has lost its moral right to rule. If the Popular Front came into power in Great Britain, and if, among other victims, the Duchess of Atholl were murdered, I hope and believe that Scotland would produce men with enough spirit to avenge her death.

"The men of the Right," writes the Marquis Merry del Val, "were howled down by their masculine and feminine colleagues, with the grossest insults and the most barefaced threats. Time and again they were told that they would not leave the House alive. Pistols were brandished in their faces, both in the chamber

and in the lobbies. Personal violence was incessantly attempted against them. It was enough that they should propose or attempt to defend any measure, however neutral in its character or necessary for the welfare of the State, for it to be immediately rejected. Their uninterrupted presence in Parliament and their bold and eloquent protests should always be remembered as one of the finest records of moral and physical courage extant. Calvo Sotelo, the bravest, the most talented, the most knowledgeable, and the most eloquent of them all, ended, by dint of perseverance and sound reasoning, by making himself heard. He at once was looked upon as a danger by the Red revolutionary leaders. They grew afraid that their adherents might, from listeners, become converts to his views on the social problem. They determined to get him out of the way. His speedy end was announced by a female fury, Dolores Ibarruri, the self-styled '*Pasionaria*' (Passion Flower). Five nights after his last great speech in Parliament his door opened to the summons of a squad of 'Shock Police' in uniform, who had left their barracks with the consent of their chiefs, and probably the connivance of the Home Secretary. Inveigled by their false representations, Señor Calvo Sotelo followed them. At three o'clock that morning his dead body was delivered over to the guardians of Madrid's principal cemetery, without any dissimulation or explanation by his captors."

"You have made your last speech," screamed *Pasionaria*. She was right. Those who loved Spain knew that this last speech of Sotelo was the last despairing effort to save Spain by persuasion. His murder proved that there was no place for legal

opposition in the Cortes, and no hope for Spain save the sword.

Let those who maintain that the revolution began when Franco rose read *Three Pictures of the Spanish Civil War*.<sup>1</sup> A Nationalist and a self-styled Democrat sum up respectively the case for Franco and the case for the Madrid Government. A Liberal who dislikes both Fascism and Communism sums up "For Spain" writing under the name of "Don Justo Medio." Here is what he says.

"The argument with which 'Democrat' seeks to prove that the insurgents had long ago planned their revolution does not greatly impress me, for the facts he gives could be quite adequately explained by the supposition that the preparations were made in order to circumvent the proletarian revolution, and the workers spoke and wrote so freely of this that no one abreast of recent Spanish history can pretend to be ignorant of it. In fact, both the Madrid and the Barcelona papers—even the respectable ones, and still more frequently those of a lower type—describe the Government forces as the 'revolutionaries' and the insurgents as the 'counter-revolutionaries.' One Syndicalist paper which I occasionally buy describes itself as 'Diario de la revolución,' This gives away the workers' case entirely. 'Of *what* revolution,' one asks, 'is this paper the organ?' 'Of the workers' revolution,' is the reply. 'But is it not the wicked Fascists who are the revolutionaries?' . . . A convincing reply to this question would be of great interest, but it has yet to be made."

The answer which "Don Justo Medio" desired has now been provided. Mr. Cecil Gerahty, in his book

<sup>1</sup> Hutchinson.

*The Road to Madrid* gives a translation of the secret document found in the Communist headquarters at La Linea. Several other copies of this document have since been discovered.

The document contains detailed plans for a Communist revolution, and lists of those who are to constitute the National Soviet, a list headed by the President, Largo Caballero.

The rising did not take place on the first date suggested in this document, but though postponed the plan was not abandoned. Mr. Gerahty found in Triana, a working class suburb of Seville, a circular which gave July 25th as "the day arranged for our vengeance." This date was exactly one week after the war broke out. Franco was only just in time. The following is a translation of a significant extract from the confidential report.

"The signal for beginning the movement will be the bursting of five small bombs at nightfall. Immediately thereafter a pretended Fascist attack on the Club of the C.N.T. (National Confederation of Labour) will be staged, a general strike will be declared, and the soldiers implicated will rise in the barracks. The 'radios' will begin to act, the T.U.V. undertaking to seize the General Post and Telegraph Office, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Ministry of War. The district 'radios' will attack the Police Stations, and the X.Y.Z. the Police Headquarters. A special 'radio' composed solely of machine-gunners and bombers will attack the Ministry of 'Gobernacion' (Interior) from the following streets: Carretas; Montera; Mayor; Correos; Paz; Alcala; Preciados; Carmen and San Geronimo. The radios will act with fifty cells of ten men each, and in the streets of secondary



and tertiary importance, and with only two cells in the streets of first importance and avenues.

"The orders are for all anti-revolutionaries to be immediately executed. The revolutionaries of the Popular Front will be called upon to second the movement and, should they refuse to do so, will be expelled from Spain."

It is easy to draw blank cheques on the future ; easy to assert but impossible to prove that had Franco not risen Spain would have evolved a moderate, democratic Government. This statement has often been made, but in view of the facts summarized in this chapter, I should be interested to know what is the evidence on which this hypothesis is based. According to the propagandists of the Left, a group of Spanish reactionaries, alarmed by the determination of the Popular Front to introduce far-reaching reforms, called upon General Franco to lead an armed revolt in order to substitute Fascism for Democracy. It is difficult to understand why reactionaries determined to oppose democracy by armed force should have failed to strike when all the odds were in their favour, and postponed the revolution until they had only a precarious chance of success. The King need never have abdicated, and indeed, was urged to remain. He could have held Madrid from within and declared a dictatorship at the cost of perhaps a hundred lives.

The Left Wing have exploited to the full an impatient outburst by Gil Robles in a speech which he delivered on October 15th, 1933 : "We must move towards a new state, and for that duties and sacrifices must be imposed ! What matters if it means shedding blood ? We need an integral power, and that is what we are

seeking. In order to realize that ideal we will not detain ourselves in archaic forms. Democracy is for us not an end but the means to go on with the conquest of a new state. When the moment comes either Parliament will submit or we shall make it disappear."

Gil Robles, like everybody who knows Spain, realized that Parliamentary democracy is unsuitable to the Spanish temperament. The theme of his speech is that he himself was seeking for some new form of democracy not unlike "organic democracy," a phrase invented, I believe, by that great Liberal, Madariaga, whose book *Anarchy and Hierarchy* may be commended to the reader.

For his refusal to entertain the idea of dictatorship and to attempt a *coup d'état* I have heard Gil Robles soundly abused by Spaniards of the Right who saw even more clearly than he did the necessity to forestall a Red revolution. But their warnings were disregarded. Gil Robles should be judged not by one speech but by his career as a whole. In 1935, the local Conservatives, alarmed by the Communist rising in 1934, once again begged Gil Robles to seize power by a *coup d'état*. He refused, and in a public speech he declared, "We are asked to carry out a *coup d'état*. We will not. I will not forget my duty, nor will the Army forget its duty to proper authority. A *coup d'état* is for a defeated minority," (he was referring to the Communist rising which had just been crushed), "and not for a party that has the nation with it. We will take power when the time comes, from the hands of the nation. In the words of Cisneros: 'These are our powers, these are our army—the people of Spain.'"

The story of Spain from 1931 to 1936 may be

summed up in a few words. The King abdicated when he could have seized power, and the Conservatives refused to attempt a *coup d'état*, for both the King and the Conservatives were determined to give democracy a chance. Democracy has perished in Spain because the Communists were no less determined that democracy should fail, and that the Popular Front should be nothing more than a "transitional form" leading to a Red dictatorship.

It is true that the King asked Primo de Rivera to establish a dictatorship as the only possible solution in a time of tragic disorder, in the course of which the Cardinal Archbishop of Saragossa had been murdered. During the eight years of the dictatorship Spain made more material progress than during any similar period of the last two centuries.

Finally, let me commend two quotations to those who still persist in the illusion that Red Spain believes in democracy. The first is from Señor Oliveira, selected by the National Council of Labour to state the Red case. He tells us that within a year of the institution of the Republic events had proved "the almost utter impossibility of acclaiming Western democracy on Spanish soil."

My second quotation is from a speech delivered by that great democrat Caballero in 1934. "What is the use of liberty? Is not the State by definition an absolute power? Certainly we Socialists and true republicans are not going to be foolish enough to grant liberty if at the first opportunity it undermines the foundations of Government."<sup>1</sup>

And to those innocent people who still attempt to assess the strength of Communism in Spain by the

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Peers, page 158.

number of Communists in the Cortes, let me reply in the words of Dimitrov :

“ Only the Communist Party is at bottom the initiator, the organizer, and the driving force of the United Front.”

## CHAPTER V

### FOREIGN INTERVENTION

"Any moral condemnation of civil war is intolerable from a Marxist standpoint."

LENIN.

I HAVE shown that Russian intervention antedated German and Italian intervention by many years, that Franco rose only just in time to anticipate a Communist revolution, and that the strength of Communism in Spain cannot be measured by self-declared Communists, since Communism works through a Communist penumbra of sympathetic Socialists. In spite of violent differences between Communists and Anarchists, both Communists and Anarchists agree on the necessity of liquidating the bourgeoisie and on the value of terrorism as a weapon in the class struggle.

I can understand the position of an extreme pacifist who condemns without reservation all use of physical force, but those who evade the claim that Franco was justified in rising by repeating with parrot-like insistence that he rose are either exceptionally silly or exceptionally uncandid. They forget that Great Britain, the United States, France, the Italy which Garibaldi united, the Greece which cast off the Turks, to say nothing of Russia, all owe their modern forms to revolutionary movements. It is those who are loudest in their praise of the Russian revolution who affect to be most shocked by Franco.

“To turn to the responsibility for intervention,” writes Sir Francis Lindley, “there is even less doubt on which side the fault lies than there is in the atrocities question. The policy of Moscow, openly proclaimed and not, therefore, in dispute, is to prepare and organize revolution abroad by means of agents liberally financed, and, if it should break out, support it with men and material.”

Since both Governments in Spain conceal the number of volunteers on their own side, and exaggerate the number of volunteers fighting for the enemy, it is impossible to estimate exactly, and futile to guess, which of these views is correct. But certain facts at any rate can be ascertained.

No Germans are fighting with the infantry of the Nationalist army since Hitler dreaded the possibility that German and French volunteers might oppose each other in the trenches. Air duels between individual Germans and French have a less dangerous effect on the two countries. The main service rendered by the Germans has been in the capacity of technical advisers behind the lines. They have been particularly useful in the anti-aircraft department.

That Italy has sent regular officers is certain, but it is by no means certain, and is indeed improbable, that units of the regular Italian army are serving in Spain.

I spent five hours with a volunteer in Spain who was half English and half Spanish, more English in many ways than Spanish. His work had brought him into close contact with the Italians, and he told me that the Italians he met were volunteers from the upper and from the middle classes, inexperienced amateur soldiers for the most part, with more gallantry than skill.

When they landed in Spain there had been a call for volunteers to drive lorries. Every Italian believes that he is a born driver by divine right, and among the casualties due to this conviction were a number of damaged lorries and two lamp posts removed from the pavements in Seville.

The proposal to withdraw volunteers appears, at the time of writing, raises some difficult points. Most of the volunteers who were fighting for the Valencia Government surrendered the passports they had, and are now Spanish citizens with Spanish passports. The International Column consists very largely of men who can never return to their own country, anti-Fascist Italians and anti-Nazi Germans. Most of them would be unwelcome in any country save Russia and France, and many of them might have some difficulty in obtaining permission even to remain in France. The withdrawal of volunteers would therefore operate greatly to the advantage of the Valencia Government.

The British public are less interested in the question of numbers as in the alleged motives which have inspired the German and Italian intervention. Nobody who has ever seen, lived in, or travelled through a country where Communism was in complete or in partial control can doubt that the main motive of the German and Italian intervention is to prevent the establishment of a Soviet state on the shores of the Mediterranean.

Mr. Eden has recently declared that Great Britain would not tolerate any attack upon the territorial integrity of Spain, and he has implied that we should be prepared to go to war to prevent Italy gaining a foothold on Spanish soil. Is it therefore so surprising that Italy and Germany are determined to prevent

*Spain becoming a Soviet colony? If Communism wins in Spain, Russia will have captured a key position commanding the passage between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, and separated only by the Straits of Gibraltar from North Africa, the Africa which Russia is determined to infect with the Communist virus. Nor will the Pyrenees, across which thousands of French volunteers have poured into Spain to fight for Communism, prove an effective barrier against infection from a Communist Spain.*

Our interest in maintaining the territorial integrity of Spain is certainly no greater than Mussolini's interest in maintaining the spiritual integrity of the Iberian Peninsula. Mussolini and Franco have explicitly denied that there have been territorial bargains in return for Italian assistance, and Franco certainly has given proof that he is prepared to go to all costs to maintain a united Spain. He refused to make terms with the Basque extremists, but for whose opposition the war would have ended long ago in a victory for the Nationalists. A well-known Nationalist slogan is "Better a Red Spain than a divided Spain."

On the other hand, the Valencia Government attempted to secure British and French support by offering these powers territorial concessions in Spanish Morocco.

Sir Francis Lindley, who believes that we have everything to gain from a victory for Franco, writes as follows :

"When you are warned against a great danger or advised to take some serious action, you naturally examine the credentials of those who warn or advise you. If we so treat those who are loudest in declaring



that a victory for General Franco will constitute a dangerous threat to the British Empire, we shall find that these are the very people who, on all other occasions, have paraded their dislike of and contempt for that Empire. So we naturally conclude that the victory they fear will be the best outcome as regards our Imperial interests. This conclusion is correct as an impartial examination of the position makes manifest.

“I suppose no one doubts now that a Red victory in Spain means a Soviet State directed from Moscow. Catalonia is already such a State, and the rest of Spain will become one if General Franco is beaten. The first result of this would be the total destruction of British property and the cessation of all British enterprise in Spain. There are a number of people in this country who would regard such a development with complacency ; but that does not alter the fact that it is our resources abroad, accumulated through the energy and enterprise of generations of British subjects, which enable our population to enjoy a standard of living higher than in any country of Europe or Asia. And British assets in Spain form no negligible part of those resources.

“The notion that a Soviet victory would conjure the danger of excessive German or Italian influence in the Western Mediterranean is a delusion. Should a Soviet State be set up in Spain, the danger of Germany entrenching herself in some Spanish possession in order to counteract Bolshevik activities becomes a very real one. General Franco, on the other hand, is fighting for Spanish unity and it is highly improbable that he would consent in the hour of victory to cede any part of the Spanish dominions. Italy is a little off

the map as a bogey after the recent Anglo-Italian exchange of Notes ; but, while the same argument applies to her as to Germany, her geographical position already makes the friendliest relations with Great Britain an imperious necessity for both countries."

Even if Franco were ready to surrender Spanish territory, he could not make Mussolini a present of Gibraltar without first capturing Gibraltar from Great Britain. We shall lose Gibraltar when we are defeated in a war in which Great Britain is on one side and Spain and Italy on the other, but if we are defeated in such a war, the loss of Gibraltar will be a detail relatively unimportant compared with the loss of our imperial power. Gibraltar has no intrinsic value save as an imperial fortress. If we cease to be an imperial power we shall have no more interest in the Mediterranean than Norway has to-day. If we are defeated in war we shall lose Gibraltar ; if we are not defeated in war we shall hold Gibraltar. The Gibraltar complex is therefore irrational, and our attention should be concentrated not on this isolated rock but on the general problem of rearmament. There would be no need to dread the possibility of war with Italy if only our pacifist warmongers would not wreck every attempt to renew the traditional friendship between Italy and this country.

Fascism is not for export. Italy, unlike Russia, is not subsidizing agents of revolution in England. Every Communist in this country, as in Spain in the past, is the agent of a foreign power which has publicly proclaimed as its policy the corruption of our armed forces as a preparation for civil war. The interests of peace are best served, not by friendship with the

agents of the Third International, but by an attitude of watchful hostility to those who preach peace in the League of Nations while preparing, in their own words, "to transform every Imperial war into a civil war."

## CHAPTER VI

### RED PROPAGANDA

**T**HE Spanish Reds have proved themselves apt disciples of those great masters of propaganda, the Russian Communists. If the war could have been won on the air and in the Press, the Reds would long ago have been victorious in spite of their defeat in the air and on the field.

There are two main branches of Red propaganda between which it is important to distinguish. First there is political exaggeration, the suppression of inconvenient facts, and the most favourable interpretation of provable facts. This form of propaganda is normal in war time, and in this war has been indulged in both by the Nationalists and the Reds. Secondly there is the deliberate circulation of lies. Characteristic examples of the first form of propaganda are the slogans that the Spanish War is a war between democracy and Fascism, and the exploitation of the accidental and misleading associations of words such as "Right Wing" and "Left Wing." The Valencia Government have been very successful in arousing the sympathy of working classes throughout the world for their cause, and their success is due to the fact that "Right Wing" suggests a united front of capitalists and reactionaries, whereas "Left Wing" still suggests

a united front not of politicians on the make, but of idealists with a sincere passion for social justice.

A point often made by Left Wing propagandists is that Franco must be fighting for Capitalism since he has been financed by capitalists. He has been financed partly by the rich and partly by the poor. The Valencia Government has the backing of one of the richest men in France, Monsieur Blum, and of many of the leading newspapers in this country which are neither owned nor controlled by the proletariat.

Only the ill-informed genuinely believe that the Nationalists are less concerned than the Popular Front to redress the grievances of the poor. Carlists and Phalangists broadly agree on a social policy which is sternly anti-capitalist, for the Nationalists are determined that in the new Spain the producer shall not be at the mercy of the banker. The policy of the new Spain does not only exist on paper as an Utopian dream. It has already been translated into practice and enforced in territory which for many months has been under Nationalist control.

"All contracts of work in existence on July 18th, 1936," writes the correspondent of *The Tablet* (May 15th, 1937), "have been declared valid and renewed. In order to guarantee the rights of the workmen there have been established in each province a certain number of 'Inspectors of Work,' who are State functionaries, visiting factories and workshops to see whether the conditions of work are carried out, and supervizing masters and employees in order to verify faults, which are immediately corrected and punished with heavy fines.

"Before a workman may be dismissed, an authorization from the 'Provincial Delegate of Work' is

necessary. This official is a kind of 'Prefect of Work' attached to each province and examining labour problems as they arise. When the Delegate of Work receives an application from an employer to dismiss a workman, master and man are summoned to give evidence so that the Delegate may adjudicate the case. If the dismissal is granted, there may still be an appeal to a 'Tribunal of Work,' consisting of three employers, three workers and an officially appointed presiding magistrate. If an employer dismisses a worker without permission, or after having been refused permission by the Delegate of Work, he is obliged to readmit him and to pay him the arrears of wages from the date of his dismissal to his readmission. . . ."

The facts enumerated in this article, and the declarations of policy published by the Carlists and the Phalangists refute the "rich *v.* poor" propaganda.

The Reds do not confine themselves to distortion of the truth but are completely reckless in their circulation of lies. Douglas Jerrold was at Toledo on the day when heavy fighting in Toledo was reported on the wireless. He did not see a shot fired. A few days later I visited Toledo and asked for details of the recent battle.

"Battle in Toledo?" said my companion in a puzzled tone. "Pull yourself together, my dear Lunn. Look at the Tagus gorge."

We were standing at a window of the Alcazar. I looked across at the Red lines and realised that a minor campaign would be necessary before the Reds could again penetrate into Toledo.

More than once in this war Red militiamen have strolled unconcernedly into villages which the Reds

had captured—on paper—only to be arrested on arrival by Nationalists who had held the village continuously since they had first captured it.

*La Métropole* of Belgium quotes a list compiled in Salamanca of the Government's successes gained on paper up to April 19th, 1937. The grand total of these claims is impressive, for the Reds have won one and a half million square kilometres, three times the total surface area of Spain, and killed and wounded two and a half million of their enemies ; have captured 345,000 prisoners ; have taken 415,000 cannons, 775,000 machine-guns ; and have shot down 56,779 aeroplanes. They have captured Huesca twenty-six times, Toledo eleven, Oviedo twenty-two times.

Peader O'Donnell, an Irishman who sympathises with the Reds, and whose book *Salud* is a vivid and moving description of Catalonia during the war, makes some entertaining comments on the Barcelona publicity service. "The service," he writes, "just shrieked with victories, proclamations, denunciations, and all that wide swiping which makes war news so ridiculous. The Anarchists alone ran a really readable paper, and that was mainly because they did tell stories of real happenings, and reflected workaday life in reports from the syndicates, but even they captured the same village far too often."

The Badajoz myth is a classic example of the fabrication of atrocity news. There is precedent for this in other wars, but there is no precedent in recent wars for committing an atrocity expressly in order to attribute it to the enemy.

The most nauseating form of Red propaganda is the deliberate policy of using women and children as a shield for their retreating troops. Senor Rugeroni

told me in Seville that on entering a village captured from the Reds he had been met by a group of thirty-five women who held their hands in front of their breasts and exclaimed, "For the love of God, don't cut them off." The retreating Reds urged them to fly, and assured them that they would be cut to pieces by the Fascists. The motives of this lie are clear. The retreating Reds hoped to enjoy an ignominious protection if only they could persuade a confused and terrified mob of women and children to retreat with them. After retreating from Malaga the Reds accused Nationalists of shelling the road along which refugees were flying.

"I myself did happen to be there," writes Captain Bolin, "and I can swear to the fact that no attack whatsoever took place, and that on the contrary the troops helped the refugees in every way, going to the extent of giving them food and remaining without any themselves for at least a whole day. Incidentally, there would have been no refugees had not the Reds terrorized the inhabitants of Malaga and forced them to leave their homes, thereby inflicting upon them untold misery and suffering."

The Nationalists have often forgone military advantages rather than inflict heavy losses on the civilian population, for it must not be forgotten that to the Nationalists the civilians behind the Red lines are not "the enemy" but fellow Spaniards to be rescued from oppression. Many civilians have undoubtedly been killed in Madrid, but Franco gave warning to the Reds of the bombardment and asked them to evacuate non-combatants.

The case for Franco on this issue was admirably stated by a group of Conservative M.P.'s in the following letter to *The Times* ;



"In your issue of December 5 you print from an address in the Haymarket an appeal to the Government to refuse to recognize General Franco. This is signed by distinguished individuals of various political parties who have found a common platform in their wish to protest publicly against the wickedness of the Spanish National leader in permitting 'the bombardment of Madrid or the attempt to starve it into surrender.'

"It is worth while asking the signatories to this letter to draw upon their military experience and to tell us exactly what tactics they would pursue if they were in General Franco's place. Can they suggest more humane methods of subduing this large town, which the Communist and Anarchist rump of the 'constitutionally elected Spanish Government' has turned into a fortress by constructing barricades and trenches and by arming the dregs of the population, and is defending by an international brigade, armed in breach of the Non-Intervention Agreement and manned in defiance of its spirit? Is it suggested that the National artillery and aircraft should remain inactive for fear of killing civilians, and that General Franco should send his men into the narrow streets to be shot down by snipers sitting in safety in the houses on either side? All we know of General Franco is that he is a gallant soldier. He has been goaded into action not by personal ambition but by witnessing the increasing outrages in Spain under a Government that in its subservience to the Left refused to govern. His rising only forestalled by a few days the projected Red revolution.

"Surely it is charitable to allow that, since in his opinion to save Spain he must occupy Madrid, he

only uses shell and bomb as dire necessities in the knowledge that his own countrymen, and even his own sympathizers, must suffer, as well as the international gangsters his opponents have called in to fight their battle. He has done what he can to save non-combatants by setting aside a large part of the capital which he has undertaken to refrain from bombing.

“We are, etc.,

ALFRED KNOX, NAIRNE SANDEMAN,  
COOPER RAWSON, ALAN GRAHAM, E. A.  
TAYLOR, VICTOR RAIKES.

“House of Commons, *Dec. 8.*”

## CHAPTER VII

### THE IRRESPONSIBILITY OF THE LEFT

THE fine art of dialectics is disappearing from the modern world. Men no longer debate ; they denounce. It is, of course, easy to understand why Communists should prefer denunciation to debate, for debate is only possible between two opponents who appeal to a standard of ethics which they both accept. The Communist denies the existence of objective morality. Those actions are good which help, and those are bad which injure, the cause of Communism. Whatever the Reds do is right, and whatever the Rights do is wrong. This doctrine has its value as a rule of faith, but it is of little use as a basis of discussion between Communists and their opponents. The application of this doctrine to propaganda may be profitably illustrated by a few striking examples.

Nothing could be less dishonest than to pose, as Communists are instructed to pose, as the friends of democracy in Great Britain and in Spain. Communists, by definition, have contrived to replace democracy by a dictatorship of the proletariat. Nothing is more fatuous than the contrast between the uncritical praise which the Communists lavish on the Russian dictatorship, and the no less uncritical abuse of which Hitler and Mussolini are the target.

The Left Wing who are so indignant with Franco for rising against a democratically elected Government were equally indignant in 1934 when a democratically elected Republican Government put down by force a Moscow-inspired rising of the Asturian miners. "The very publicists," writes Mr. Arthur Bryant, "who are now demanding British intervention and a world war in order to assert the inalienable rights of legally constituted government were only two years before justifying rebellion against an equally legally constituted Government. It is fortunate for these illogical war-mongers that the memory of the British public is so short."

Our Left Wing never tire of denouncing the persecution of intellectuals in Italy and Germany, but with a few and honourable exceptions have remained silent on the infinitely more tragic suppression of intellectual life in Russia. It is logical to deplore foreign intervention in the Spanish civil war. It is irrational to protest indignantly because the Italians<sup>7</sup> and the Germans are helping Franco, while continuing to applaud the intervention of Russia and France. I can understand all those who denounce bombing from the air as inhuman, but I cannot understand the position of men who are indignant when Guernica is bombed and who raise no protest against the bombing of Saragossa, Talavera, Seville, Avila or Granada.

I have recently read *Death in the Morning* by Helen Nicholson, a beautiful and moving account of life in Granada during the first two months of the war. Granada was never in the hands of the Reds, nor did the Reds make any serious attempt to capture it. On the outbreak of the war the White garrison seized Granada and have held it continuously up to this day.

In the early days of the war they had no anti-aircraft guns, and their few antiquated aeroplanes were of little use against modern bombing planes. Granada was constantly bombed, but no attempt was ever made to attack it from the ground. The bombing was not designed as a preparation for military attack.

I have seen a review of this book in the *Manchester Guardian*. "Unhappily," writes the reviewer, "all the evidence of the war goes to show that it is impossible in bombardment of towns which are used as military centres to avoid hitting civilians. There is no proof that the killing of civilians was of deliberate intention."

Probably not. But the *Manchester Guardian* took a very different tone when Guernica, which unlike Granada, was on the fringe of a battle zone, and which, unlike Granada, was a centre for the making of munitions, was alleged, rightly or wrongly, to have been bombed by German aeroplanes.

Even more disedifying than the inconsequence is the irresponsibility of Left Wing propaganda. The reckless way in which charges are made is only equalled by the lighthearted gaiety with which these charges are abandoned—they are, of course, never formally withdrawn. Mud-slinging takes the place of substantiated attacks. I should define mud-slinging as abuse unsupported by evidence, and mud-slinging is an accepted method of Red propaganda.

My first examples are taken from a book, *Behind the Spanish Barricades*, by Mr. John Langdon-Davies. There are many things about this book which I liked. Mr. Langdon-Davies both knows and loves Spain, and he writes with passionate enthusiasm of its people. I prefer a fanatic of the Left to superior people who

dismiss the Spanish tragedy with the formula "Six of one and half a dozen of the other."

"I think," writes Mr. Langdon-Davies, "one side right and the other criminally wrong," and because I agree with him on this point I have read his book with a certain sympathy, radically though I disagree with his views on the origin of the war. But the value of his book as an historical record of these events is ruined by his irresponsibility. He tells us that a Catholic paper, the *A.B.C.* of Cordova, published a statement that the Bishop of Pamplona has just granted "a hundred days' plenary indulgence to anyone killing a Marxist."

When Mr. Langdon-Davies was informed that a plenary indulgence by definition cannot be limited to any period of time, and that the phrase "a hundred days' plenary indulgence" is therefore nonsense, he made some contemptuous remark about "quibbles," but the point at issue is not the distinction between one type of indulgence and another, but the accuracy of a writer who, while professing to quote from a Catholic paper, attributes to that paper an elementary mistake of which no Catholic editor or contributor could possibly be guilty. And since the alleged extract cannot be genuine we need waste no time in proving that Catholic bishops do not grant indulgences for killing Marxists. Mr. Langdon-Davies is an honest man, and he has clearly been the victim of a fake.

On page 284 of his book I found this statement. "Yet Toledo was taken. Machine has triumphed over man. The men in my photograph were burned to death or shot against a wall."

I wrote to Mr. Langdon-Davies and asked if there was any evidence for this statement. He replied,

"The evidence for what happened when the rebels took Toledo can be found in news agency reports and in various reputable newspapers. . . ." He gave no references and he added, "No doubt the Press Attaché at the Spanish Embassy can assist you with details."

I accordingly wrote to the Spanish Embassy and asked them if there was any evidence in support of Mr. Langdon-Davies' charges, to which they replied as follows :

"EMBAJADA DE ESPAÑA,  
24, BELGRAVE SQUARE,  
LONDON, S.W.1.

"DEAR SIR,

"The Spanish Ambassador has asked me to reply to your letter of July 1st, and to say that he has no knowledge of the statement in question. Mr. Langdon-Davies has not communicated with us on the subject, and we are not in a position to say what was the source of his information.

"I am sorry that we cannot help you in this matter.

"Yours faithfully,

"STANLEY RICHARDSON."

Mr. Langdon-Davies was in Toledo during the siege of the Alcazar, and in his book he describes the life of the garrison which he did not share, but which his imaginative gifts have enabled him to reconstruct. He refers to the "implicated priests who fled to the Alcazar." One need not be particularly well informed to know that before the mines were exploded the Reds granted a request to send a priest into the garrison in order that he might baptize babies born during the siege, hear confessions and administer the sacraments

to men who had been without a priest since the siege began. Most of those who have visited Spain know that the priest in question has been severely criticized because he only remained within the Alcazar for a few hours. The "implicated priests" to whom Mr. Langdon-Davies refers, existed only in his imagination. In the following passage Mr. Langdon-Davies draws a picture of life within the Alcazar.

"If only someone could write their history ; how as the days of futile agony pass on some have grown cruel and others religious ; some have grown beards, and others have kept themselves as clean shaven and dapper as if there was an alternative to lingering death ; the stealthy hunting of women ; the mothers watching their children ; wondering if to-morrow there will still be a thin drop of nourishment to be squeezed from their starved breasts ; the children still thinking of new games, playing fascists versus reds no doubt. Some souls are growing daily more noble beneath the strain, others are cracked and go squeaking, like bats, to hell. . . ."

"What on earth do they not in their feverish state confess to the priests ? And some are promising themselves a life of purity if they ever get out, others a visit to the nearest brothel."

As this passage may leave an unpleasant taste in the reader's mouth, I will quote a statement made to Major McNeill-Moss by a man who had fought throughout the siege.

"They achieved an exaltation. They came to see themselves defenders of faith, under divine protection. There was no priest with them. There were no services, except those at the burials in the riding-school. Thus, and because they were so often solitary, the faith



of each grew individual. Some came to feel themselves inspired. One recalled his feelings during those days.

“ ‘ We are few, they are many. But numbers are not all. We believe, we have faith. They do not believe, they would destroy faith. They think ; that is in the brain. We pray ; that is in the heart. I myself, sometimes I cry. But I am not afraid. If I die, I die. But that is only myself. What I believe cannot die.

“ ‘ As I take my aim I pray, as I throw a bomb I pray.

“ ‘ We are filthy. We have not washed. Our clothes stench. We have insects. All that is around us is reeking and disgusting. We live half in filth. But we live half, away beyond it. We do not swear. We do not blaspheme. We do not allow ourselves carnal thoughts. Those who have wives within the Alcazar do not take them.

“ ‘ The Reds think. Thinking is nothing. Presently they will give way. We believe. That endures for ever.’ ”

## CHAPTER VIII

### A BRITISH VISITOR IN MADRID

**E**VEN those who differ from the Duchess of Atholl on the Spanish issue respect her integrity, and realise that in defending what she believes to be true she has alienated many friends. Mr. R. G. Dawson, for instance, resigned from the Chairmanship of the Blackford Unionist Association and from the Unionist Executive Council of the Duchess's constituency. In the course of his address at a special meeting of the Executive Council held in the Conservative Club, Perth, on June 2nd 1937, he said,

“Yet, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Member for this Conservative constituency, dedicated to these principles, in her recent visit to Spain metaphorically certainly, and literally probably, took the hand of friendship of Communists and even of Anarchists in Madrid and Valencia. . . . We are asked to sympathize with men who, since the outbreak of War, have put to death 15,000 priests : who have soaked suspected Nationalist sympathizers with petrol and burnt them alive : who have shot prisoners, not so as to kill, but so as to be able to bury them helpless alive : who have made the wholesale execution of hostages a perfectly new feature in the already sufficiently ghastly horrors of modern war : who in the towns under their control have organized murder-gangs, the members of which

acting as judges one moment, and executioners the next, have cut off hundreds, whose only fault was to hope for better times. And yet against all this our Member is satisfied to assure us that the prisoners she interrogated expressed themselves as contented with their treatment—as though men in the hands of such foes could be expected to do anything else ! ”

I first met the Duchess of Atholl a few years ago when she and I attended a committee meeting founded to counteract the subversive efforts of her present allies. In those days the Duchess was much impressed by the Communist peril. None of us could have foreseen that on June 24th 1937 she would take the chair at a meeting in the Albert Hall on “Spain and Culture,” a meeting at which Left Wing extremists spoke, and which advertised among its attractions the promise of a message broadcast direct from Moscow.

I suspect that the Duchess’ change of front is due not to a change of attitude towards Communism but to her dread of Nazi Germany. She regards Germany as a greater danger than Russia, and has apparently been much influenced by a book, *The Nazi Conspiracy in Spain*, which I have already analysed in these pages.

The Duchess spent nine days in Red Spain, and was conducted round Madrid. She would seem to have been less observant than the correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, who sympathizes, as the Duchess does, with the Valencia Government, but who is less uncritical in his admiration for that Government. He tells us that the official records of those massacred in Madrid reached the appalling total of 35,000. “The records still exist.” He insists that “the number of

persons executed in Madrid alone can hardly be much less than 40,000."

He writes, "The great walls in front of which the victims in the Chamartin de la Rosa were lined up and shot, can still be seen. They are scarred and pock-marked with bullet holes. These walls have a whitish surface with red stone or brick beneath, so that the marks are very conspicuous—there are long streaks, four or five feet up on an average, where the white surface has been shot away altogether. There is no sight in all Spain more terrible than these walls and the great open space in front of them, where the dead lie side by side, with the earth heaped over them, in trenches of such size that the mind shrinks from trying to conjecture how many there may be."

"Daily executions," wrote *The Times* correspondent in an uncensored despatch (September 26th 1936), "on one day there were eighty—continue in Madrid. . . . The ghastly array in the morgue has been made more horrible by the bodies of murdered women. One was the Marquesa de Silvela, wife of the Marques, who with his younger brother was taken from his house and shot some time ago. . . . The other, Señora de Aldama, was shot because she would not reveal where her husband and son were hiding. . . . It is still sufficient to be a nobleman or a priest to be condemned to death." A Spanish nobleman, of course, for the Duchess of Atholl was in no danger.

*The Times* in its despatch of October 6th 1936 expressed sympathy with the citizens who "have hungered spiritually for nine long weeks. Anti-Christ has been given a long waited opportunity." The Duchess was more fortunate. She attended a Protestant chapel and told England about it.

If St. Paul's were wrecked and Westminster Abbey closed, and every decent Anglican clergyman in hiding, what should we think of a Spanish Duchess who on her return to Spain informed her friends that she had been able to attend Mass in Red London?

In Madrid the Duchess of Atholl met the Communist Minister of Education. He assured her that the Government were anxious to reopen the churches. I hope the Duchess has not read the rude and tactless remarks on religious propaganda for visitors published in *Solidaridad Obrera*,<sup>1</sup> the organ of the Regional Confederation of Labour in Catalonia, and quoted elsewhere in this book.

The Duchess of Atholl has much to say of Father Locardio Lobo, whom she describes as Acting-Vicar of San Gines in Madrid. *Acting-Vicar* is good. A pleasant sinecure indeed to "act" as Vicar of a church that is closed. The Dean of Canterbury described this cleric as Vicar-General of Madrid. There is no Vicar-General of Madrid, and has never been.

Nor is Father Lobo even an "acting-vicar." In the course of a lecture tour he was twice challenged—in Paris and in Brussels—to produce documents to prove that he was a priest in good standing, and on his failure to do so, was excluded from the Altar. The inaccuracies of the Duchess and the Dean may not seem very important, but they are some indication of the value to be placed on their "impressions." Father Lobo, at a time when every decent priest was either dead or in hiding, drove through Madrid in a car flying the Red banner. He is an agent of the Red Government.

"Father Lobo," writes the Duchess, "frankly admitted that the Catholic Church had not been

<sup>1</sup> January 28th 1937.

blameless." No doubt Caballero admitted with equal frankness that Franco had not been blameless in the events of last July.

The Duchess was much impressed by the Minister of Justice, an Anarchist. And from this Minister she extracted yet another "frank admission." It seems that among the extremists of the Left there have been "a good many irregular unions." I feel certain that the Minister did not quote to the Duchess a remark which he made at a meeting presided over by the Minister of Propaganda, "Why punish prostitution when it should be legally organized?"

I wonder if the Minister of Justice was present at a meeting at Saragossa of the C.N.T. held just before the war, whose proceedings are described by Mr. Langdon-Davies, an ardent supporter of the Red cause, in his book *Behind the Spanish Barricades*. "They passed a resolution that if anyone, male or female, chanced to rouse the sexual feelings of another, it amounted to a gross and palpable interference with the freedom and happiness of that other, unless the guilty person was prepared to relieve the feelings he or she had produced. They therefore carried with acclamation the proposition that such a person, if they refused to alleviate the suffering they had imposed on another by rousing sexual feeling, must be exiled from the town or village where they resided for a period long enough for all fires to be quenched."

The Minister of Justice escorted the Duchess to the model prison in which "political prisoners" are confined, that is to say, prisoners who, like the Duchess, are of noble birth, or who, like the present writer, wear a collar and sometimes a tie. The Duchess was relieved to discover that the sentences run from one year to

thirty years, and that a year is remitted for twelve months of good conduct, so if all goes well, people who have been convicted for being born, like the Duchess, into the aristocracy, or for wearing collars and ties, may be released in 1952.

I wonder if the Minister of Justice quoted to the Duchess two recent remarks of his at a public meeting. "The Courts of Justice are not to be merely popular but primitive tribunals. . . . Man comes not from God but from the beasts ; that is why his reactions are those of a beast," except, of course, when he is talking to a British Duchess. Spanish Duchesses have to resign themselves to the more normal reactions.

The Duchess, of course, admits that atrocities have taken place in Red Spain, and advances the usual excuse that the Government were powerless to prevent these owing to the fact that Franco's insurrection robbed them not only of the Army but of most of the police. The excuse is unconvincing, for the Red forces contain thousands of soldiers and Civil Guards who could as easily have been coerced into restoring order as into fighting on the side of the Reds. Moreover, the Duchess forgets that the Red Terror which provoked this revolt occurred while the army and police were still at the disposal of the Popular Front Government, and that this Government took no steps to prevent the massacre of political opponents, the burning of churches and the destruction of newspaper offices.

The Duchess sees no inconsistency in asking our sympathy for a Government which she represents as democratic, orderly and in control of the situation, and expecting us to acquit that Government of complicity in a persecution as terrible as Diocletian's, on the ground that it could not maintain order. The

recent internecine street battles at Barcelona reinforce the second and refute the first of these mutually contradictory pleas.

The Duchess, who is, of course, impressed by the small number of Communists in the Government, would be less impressed if she had studied the new tactics of Moscow, the advance by "partial slogans." Here is a quotation from *La Vanguardia* of Barcelona. "The trick by which they (the Communist Party) do not appear in the Government with any greater preponderance than before is too naive to deceive anyone." Sanguine *Vanguardia*. The trick has succeeded all too well—in England.

*The Times* correspondent, who spent rather longer than nine days in Madrid, was not so easily hoodwinked. "Madrid," he wrote in an uncensored despatch on November 21st 1936, "is inundated with Moscow posters to which the Spanish captions have been set, plastering the walls, while the cinemas give endless series of Communist films."

In an article in *The Empire Review* the Duchess stated that she had been supplied with a list of pastors and evangelists executed by the Insurgents. I challenged her to produce this list. I pointed out that the Burgos Government publishes the names of the victims, and the dates and places of the atrocities, and I asked the Duchess to be equally precise and to give the names of the alleged victims and to prove that they were executed *qua* pastors and not *qua* Reds. On the second point she remained silent, and on the first she quoted a statement of a Mr. King that "he is not at liberty to give the names and addresses of the sufferers."

Their address is presumably Heaven, and it is difficult to see why the Duchess should be reluctant to



publish names of these pastors unless her allies suspect that the pastors have never been executed. *Habeas corpus* is an accepted principle of British law, *Ne habeas nomen* of Red propaganda.

In the course of a conversation in Spain I was assured that a pastor alleged to have been executed was alive and flourishing, but as I have not obtained evidence in support of this assertion, I do not expect the Duchess to attach any weight to it. My standards of evidence are more exacting than hers. Meanwhile *quod gratis asseritur gratis negatur*. I deny that any pastors as such have been executed, and I suggest that the Duchess has brought charges of murder which she is not in a position to substantiate.

I also drew the Duchess' attention to the following fact. No great Spanish leader who was in opposition to the Popular Front in February 1935 has seceded to the Government, but many of the most respected leaders of Spanish Liberalism and Radicalism have deserted the Popular Front.

It was irrelevant to reply, as the Duchess did, by a catena of names of politicians who have supported the Government from its foundation, and it was ungenerous to reply by suggesting that scholars of European reputation, such as Marañón and Unamuno had been influenced by a desire to join the winning side. Men are not necessarily base because their views to-day resemble those which the Duchess once professed.

The Duchess attempted to discredit Dr. Marañón because he signed an anti-Franco declaration of the intellectuals on July 30th. According to the Madrid correspondent of *The Times*, writing in the issue for July 2nd 1937, most of those who signed the Manifesto of the intellectuals to which the Duchess of Atholl

attaches so much importance, "have since left the Republic ; several have sons serving with the Nationalists. Yet the pamphlet circulates."

I do not blame men who resort to a somewhat unheroic subterfuge to escape from the attack of terrorists. By attempting to discredit Marañón the Duchess of Atholl has only succeeded in discrediting the Government which she defends. A Government which forces professors to sign declarations in which their subsequent conduct proves they do not believe, is a Government which no honest intellectual in other countries should support. These signatures are worth precisely as much as the "voluntary" confessions which are a routine fixture in the state trials in Soviet Russia.

It is clear that the Duchess of Atholl has never studied the Communist technique for impressing visiting delegations. Mr. Andrew Smith, as I have already said, is a working man who gave his earnings to the Communist party, and who, having worked for some years in Russia, returned to expose the most brutal racket that the world has ever seen. In his book he explains how hospitals are rigged up for the benefit of simple visitors, and then gives us a picture of a hospital in which a disillusioned American Communist died.

"The next day my wife and I went to the hospital to visit Knotek. He was lying on a bed of boards without springs, in a cold, dark, narrow corridor. His lips and tongue were black, and he was burning with fever. He lay uncared for in the midst of his own excrement. When I saw the terrible condition the boy was in, I immediately demanded to see the chief doctor, to whom I complained bitterly. He explained

that the boy was going to die anyway, so there was no use bothering with him."

It was Potemkin who invented that technique which bears his name. The Empress Catherine of Russia liked to feel that her people loved her, and when she journeyed through the Crimea she demanded evidence of this love. With the co-operation of the Director of the National Theatre Potemkin arranged for model villages to be built along the route of her journey, and actors to impersonate cheering and enthusiastic villagers. The Communists in Russia and in Spain have mastered the Potemkin technique and applied it with success to model prisons and model hospitals. It seems to have been as successful with Katharine, Duchess of Atholl as with Catherine, Empress of Russia.

## CHAPTER IX

### "NOTHING LEFT TO PERSECUTE"

*"The things I want my Church to stand for lie behind what Russia has  
us."*

THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY.

*"The attitude of some of our highly-placed divines is stupefying, and to  
me personally, as a life-long member of the Church of England, revolting."*

SIR FRANCIS LINDLEY.

THE *Manchester Guardian* in its issue of June 24th 1937 published an illuminating article by a special correspondent who had just returned from Spain. "The attack on religion," he wrote, "has been more radical in loyalist Spain than anywhere else in the world, including even Mexico and Russia. All Roman Catholic churches have been closed down as places of worship, and nearly all have been completely destroyed inside, only the walls, roof, and tower remaining. Nor have the Protestant churches escaped, with the exception (it would appear to be the only one) of the small German church in Madrid. In that little church divine service still goes on, thanks to the fantastic courage and devotion of the pastor, Dr. Fliedner, and his popularity amongst the poor of Madrid, thanks also to its position (it is very small and is built between houses and behind a garden with trees). The English church in Barcelona has been closed. The two Non-conformist places of worship at Clot and Pueblo Nueva have been burnt. . . .

"Visitors to Madrid are shown 'an unburnt church' as a piece of propaganda, and some families in Madrid have had permission to hold private Mass. But these are the loneliest exceptions. . . .

"The lovely churches of Valencia have been burnt out or destroyed inside, and are now used as garages, repair shops, depots, and so on. . . .

"In Russia the churches are full and religion is a power still. In Russia persecution has a meaning. In loyalist Spain there is nothing left to persecute. . . ."

Religion rather than economics is the key to the Spanish struggle, and religion will determine the issue when the same battle is fought out on English soil. It is only the mentally inert who still dismiss the Spanish struggle by repeating a few party slogans. "Anti-clericalism, not anti-religion. . . . Alliance between the materialistic Church and reactionaries. . . ." These phrases are twice blessed, for they absolve both the speaker and his audience from the travail of thought. Let us leave them to their slogans, and search for the significance of this totalitarian fury which seeks to destroy in Red Spain every trace of religion, Protestant no less than Catholic.

The war in Spain is only a phase in the recurring battle between the two rival interpretations of life, the spiritual and the materialistic. The economic issues are of secondary importance. It is, indeed, the paradox of Marxian materialism that the religion which Marx rejects provides the only rational basis for the reforms which Marx desired. If the evils of capitalism are the consequence not of the evil wills of sinning men, but of predetermined material forces, the indignation with which Marx attacks capitalists is irrational. If the soul be a figment and free will an

illusion, and man no more than a machine, it is no more immoral to exploit a wage slave than to exploit a machine, for "morality" has no meaning in a world of machinery. A motor car may be inefficient; it cannot possibly be immoral. If we argue from the Marxian premise, it is impossible to prove that it is more immoral to throw discarded workmen into the streets than to sell discarded machinery for scrap iron. It is religion alone which endows man with moral rights, which provides the weak with a charter, and imposes upon the powerful definite obligations to the weak.

We cannot escape the fate of Spain if we fight materialism with materialistic methods. Materialism is an inconsequential doctrine, and we must begin by exposing its fundamental silliness. Nothing could be more fatuous than to preach deterministic materialism on one platform and to clamour for "Academic Freedom" on the next. This demand for "Academic Freedom" is one of those partial slogans which professorial Communists are expected to exploit in the United States. Communism in practice is more logical than Communism in theory. Denial of free will has led in Russia to its inevitable consequence, the abolition of all freedom, academic no less than economic.

We must fight materialism with the weapons of the spirit, for Communism cannot be kept at bay merely by social reform. Social reform is not a substitute for, but a logical consequence of Christianity. The premise that rich men will find it more difficult than the poor to enter the kingdom of heaven is the premise on which a Christian society must be built. Christ did not say, "Don't bother about doctrine, provided you

preach socialism." Christ said, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." The modern tendency is to reverse the order of importance, and to endeavour to get the man in the street back into the pew by preaching the latest economic fad from the pulpit.

"The determination to provide," said the Dean of Canterbury, "the utmost cultural as well as physical opportunities to all gives promise of the realisation of a social order nearer to the intention of Christ than anything I have seen in Spain during any of my previous visits." But God did not become man only to provide swimming baths and elementary education for the poor.

If I criticize, as I shall, the deans who visited Red Spain, I criticize them because they have betrayed the great traditions of the Church to which they belong. If England is to be recalled to religion the national Church must play her part in that recall. In modern England an attitude of hazy benevolence to Communism is a popular substitute for social service. It costs nothing either in money or in time, and helps to establish a reputation for intelligence. It is doubly unfortunate that the Church of England, which still enjoys great prestige and power, should be weakened at this critical moment by the fact that so many of our leading ecclesiastics speak with vague sympathy and respect of Russian Communism. In so far as these ecclesiastics are moved by sympathy for the poor, their Left Wing views are praiseworthy, but their sincerity might be less questionable if they endeavoured to apply Communist methods to reduce the grave disproportion between the stipends of the higher and lower clergy in their own Church. The usual explana-

tion of this disparity is not wholly convincing. Episcopal entertaining expenses may be heavy, but a Socialist bishop should be content to offer his guests high tea.

The spell of Red Spain is a symptom less of an increasing interest in social justice than of a failure of nerve. Youth, it is hoped, may be recaptured if the pulpit becomes the loud speaker for Left Wing doctrines. No more melancholy miscalculation can be conceived.

But there is no need for pessimism. The rapid decline of Anglicanism in the eighteenth century was followed by the Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic revivals, and Anglicanism may yet produce in this century a revival no less remarkable than the revivals associated with the names of Wesley and Keble.

It would be difficult to over-estimate the debt of England to the Anglican Church of the last century. Posterity will not easily find among modern Anglicans men who will rank with the great Victorian divines, with King of Lincoln, Temple, Pusey, Keble, Lightfoot, Church or Farrar. A verger who showed me over Canterbury Cathedral told me that in Dean Farrar's day the police had to control the long queue of would-be worshippers, which extended far beyond the Cathedral into the street. "In those days," he said, "they preached the word of God. But this Dean of ours he preaches Social Credit, and there are no queues to worry the police." The great Victorians doubtless have their successors in the Church of to-day, but they will not be found among those who use their pulpits as sounding boards for revolutionary economics or Left Wing propaganda.

I wish I knew the answer to a question which I was asked during my journey through Spain.



**"Your Protestants are Christians still, are they not? And if they are Christians surely they must feel that it is shocking to murder thousands of bishops and priests, and particularly shocking to burn so many priests alive. Why are your bishops so eager to scold Mussolini and Hitler, and yet are so slow to condemn the barbarous atrocities on defenceless priests and nuns?"**

I wish I had a solution to the selective indignation of certain Protestant ecclesiastics. Anti-clericalism might be pleaded as an excuse for an attack on Cardinal Archbishops, but the priests who have been murdered by the thousand are underpaid and overworked members of the proletariat, themselves of peasant stock.

Europe to-day is facing a threat even more dangerous than the Moslem threat to the Christian world of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Constantinople would not have fallen but for the rivalry between Byzantine partizans of Rome and the Greek Orthodox Church, and England may yet fall if Communists continue to enjoy their present success in enlisting the sympathetic support of foolish Christians in their campaign against Christianity.

The case for a United Christian Front was stated by my Father, Sir Henry Lunn, in a letter to *The Times* on July 23rd 1937. My Father wrote :

**"In 1925, as British Treasurer of the Universal Conference of Life and Work, now sitting at Oxford, I was present at the official memorial service held at Stockholm to the martyred Russian Patriarch Tikhon. All Christians united in this expression of their sympathy for the martyrs of Russia and their detestation of the persecutions of which they were the victims. According to the Special Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (June 24) :—**

“ ‘The attack on religion has been more radical in Loyalist Spain than anywhere else in the world, including even Mexico and Russia. . . . Nor have Protestant Churches escaped. . . . The two non-conformist places of worship at Clot and Pueblo Nueva have been burnt. . . . In Loyalist Spain there is nothing left to persecute.’

“ ‘Why should Christians to-day be less united in their detestation of persecution than they were in the time of the Russian persecution? Is it because they have been misled into accepting the myth of a military rising against a democratic Government? I know Spain well. I was in Cadiz on the day of the General Election, 1936, and was left with no illusions as to the methods under which that election was held.

“ ‘At the Methodist Conference in Bradford, which is still sitting, and which represents more than 2,000,000 adherents, the committee of which I was a member drafted a resolution, which was carried unanimously, and which affirmed that the religious situation in Russia, Germany, Spain, and other countries calls for special intercession at the present time, when the universal Church is confronted with a concerted and violent attack upon the faith. It expresses its sorrow at the sufferings of Christians in these countries, deplors the violence and bloodshed which have accompanied the civil strife in Spain, and prays for the speedy ending of the war.

“ ‘This resolution wipes out, so far as Methodism is concerned, the tragic disgrace of being involved in the action of the self-appointed committee of six, including two Deans and a leading Methodist minister, who accepted the hospitality of the Government of Valencia and gave a report exclusively based on their visit to

the territory governed by Valencia. Such action would have been paralleled in the early history of the Christian Church if six Christians had accepted Nero's hospitality and visited Rome, reporting afterwards to the Church at Jerusalem that Nero promised when affairs were settled to give perfect liberty to the form of Divine Worship which he had driven into the Catacombs.

"For fifty years I have been actively associated with the movement for the Reunion of Christendom. We have never worked to reunite Protestants against Rome, but to unite all Christians in the war against anti-Christ. The Reunion Conference at Grindelwald in 1895 commissioned me to convey an address to the Pope in reply to the bull *Ad Anglos*. The address affirmed that 'underlying all our differences there was a real unity.' It was signed by the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in England, the Chairman of the Baptist Union, Hugh Price Hughes, the Methodist leader, and notably by Dr. Farrar, subsequently Dean of Canterbury. He would certainly never have anticipated that his successor at Canterbury would broadcast a plea for the Valencia Government from Madrid, when every Catholic Church in that city had been closed by that Government.

"Since August 4, 1914, we have been sated with horrors and have lost that power of sympathy to which Robert Wilberforce appealed on behalf of the victims of the Slave Trade and Gladstone on behalf of a comparative handful of suffering Bulgarians. But now the world-wide campaign against Christians calls for united action by all Christian men. Meanwhile :—

"'The souls of them that have been slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held, cry with a loud voice, saying : "How long, O Lord,

holy and true, wilt thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood upon those who dwell on the earth? ” ” ”

My Father's original resolution was far more definite than the resolution which was eventually passed. The Methodist minister, referred to by my Father in the above letter, seconded the resolution which was carried. My Father did not, of course, mean to imply in his letter that the resolution in question was an implicit vote of censure on the Methodist minister concerned.

To this letter the Archbishop of Westminster replied in a letter which began as follows :

“Those who belong to the Catholic and Roman Church will have read with appreciation and respect Sir Henry Lunn's moving appeal in your columns for a united Christian Front against the world-wide anti-Christian onslaught. Pius XI explicitly appeals in his letter ‘Divini Redemptoris’ to all who believe in God. Between those who believe in Christ as true God and true man and worship Him there should be charity—an effort to draw nearer to Him and so nearer to one another. This means not only friendly relationship but mutual help in defending the civilization which is founded on the truths enunciated in the Nicæan creed. Sir Henry rightly insists on this bond between us. Let us be frank. There have been in the past misunderstandings and faults of manner on both sides, and of temper or a lack of charity in controversy. These, our failings and differences, the enemies of religion have exploited. But the realization of a common peril is drawing Christians together in practical sympathy. In Germany prayers have been offered in Catholic churches for the persecuted Protestants, and

in this country the Methodists have unanimously approved the resolution of sympathy for the persecuted Catholics in Spain. I thank them and Sir Henry Lunn with all my heart."

The concluding passage of this letter in which the Archbishop refutes the charge that the Vatican sympathises with Fascism will be quoted in a subsequent chapter.

## CHAPTER X

### THE *TE DEUM* OF THE DEAN

*"A real religious note lies behind life in Spain to-day."*

THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY.

*"Under the twelve months' administration of the present Spanish Government over 4000 priests have been murdered in cold blood; nuns have been stripped naked in the streets, outraged and murdered; churches, shrines, private chapels and religious statues have been desecrated with unspeakable obscenities and destroyed. The Cathedral of Valencia, the seat of the Government, has had a road driven through it which is in daily use."*

"THE TIMES," APRIL 16TH 1937.

*"Someone is financing the tour, of course, but the less said about that the better."*

THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY.

NATIONALIST Spain will not easily forget the fact that two clerical deputations have visited unredeemed Spain where the churches are closed, but no clerical deputation has shown any interest in reconquered Spain where the churches are open. It was not only the partiality displayed by the clerical deputations that shocked Nationalist Spain, but certain incidental details to which the Nationalists attached, perhaps, an altogether disproportionate importance. They were shocked that clergymen should accept travelling and other expenses from a Government in whose territory priests had been massacred and the churches burned. They were amused rather than shocked by the fact that the clerics accepted with alacrity the advice given them by their hosts to leave

their clerical collars behind them in England. A courteous guest complies with the wishes of his host in such trivial matters, and I do not think the travelling clerics can be blamed for discarding those clerical collars which might have led to a regrettable confusion between progressive deans who accept the hospitality of a Government in whose territory Christians are persecuted, and reactionary priests who merely die for Christianity.

The Spaniards are unreasonable in such matters. They argued with conviction that though a soldier might discard his uniform to escape in disguise from captivity or to penetrate as a spy into enemy lines, and that though a soldier of Christ might sneak round Madrid disguised as a proletarian while he was saying Mass at the risk of his life, no soldier, whether of the King or of the King of Kings, should accept the hospitality of those who have insulted his uniform and who have done all in their power to banish that uniform from the territory under their control.

The first clerical deputation to Red Spain consisted of the Dean of Rochester (now Bishop of Bath and Wells), the Dean of Chichester, the Rev. Philip Usher, Chaplain to the Bishop of Gloucester, Mr. Percy Bartlet of the Society of Friends (what would Fox have thought of fraternizing with those who preach a doctrine of violence and hate?), the Rev. Henry Brinton, and the Rev. Henry Carter. According to Mr. Carter the party were the "guests of the Government of Spain." Mr Carter is a distinguished Methodist, but his sympathy for the Red Government survived the discovery that Methodists were not allowed to meet for public worship in Barcelona.

My Father, a life-long Liberal and Methodist, read

this report while he was on the Mediterranean. It made him very angry. An earlier letter of his in the *Manchester Guardian* on the Spanish War provoked some disagreeable replies. One gentleman wrote from the Reform Club to express the view that my Father might reasonably be expelled from the Club.

And I dare say he was right.

In this report the deputation asserts that priests were seldom killed by their own parishioners unless they were "actively unpopular." If this be true, the martyrs of Spain will receive rather a cool welcome from St. Peter, for there is nothing more disedifying than a shepherd who is unpopular with his sheep.

From Barcelona the deputation proceeded to Madrid, which, it seems, has witnessed the execution of many deservedly unpopular priests. Mr. Henry Carter recalls "two unforgettable memories" associated with the day on which they reached Madrid. The first is that of Dr. Underhill leading the little delegation in the *Te Deum* and a psalm just before they entered the city. "As I write," says Mr. Carter, "I seem to stand in that chill dawn and hear the words 'Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror that flyeth by night.'" But there was nothing to be afraid of; they were not wearing their clerical collars.

The *Te Deum*, according to tradition, was first sung when St. Ambrose was besieged in his Basilica by the army of an heretical Emperor. If, however, the *Te Deum* is to be sung by Protestants on entering a city in which every church is closed and every decent priest in hiding, it had better be revised. "The ignoble army of martyrs disedify thee" would bring the *Te Deum* into line with modern thought.

The second of Mr. Carter's "unforgettable



memories " was provided by a chivalrous hotel keeper who refused to accept payment for their party, a noble gesture, but not perhaps surprising if the Government of Spain, as Mr. Carter elsewhere assures us, were paying the expenses of the party. The inn-keeper could hardly expect to be paid twice over. But Mr. Carter was deeply moved by his generosity. " With a vivid sense of the presence of God and the chivalry of man we rejoined our colleagues."

I prefer Mr. Carter's disarming candour on the question of hospitality to the more discreet references of a later visitor, the Dean of Canterbury, whose cryptic allusion to expense is quoted at the head of this chapter.

I spent a great deal of time in Spain trying to convince Spaniards that the Barcelona deputation does not represent the Church of England. I quoted as much as I could remember of the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar's protest. The Bishop stated that had he been consulted he would have advised this deputation " to visit both sides, and not to go as the guests of either party," and he added, " I must protest that their report is wholly inadequate as an account of ' alleged atrocities ' against the Church in Spain. I have been visiting Spain each year for four years past. I have seen a progressive deterioration of the organs of government during this period, and witnessed the burning of the historic Church at Niebla last April (1936)—one of the several hundreds of buildings wantonly destroyed under the eyes of the authorities. . . . The Churchmen's Mission does not represent the Anglican Church or the diocese of Gibraltar."

The Duke of Argyll, Abbot Martin, the Rev. H. J. Fynes-Clinton, and the Rev. W. R. Corbould are

the signatories to a letter which concludes with the following paragraph.

“We believe that we represent the feelings of countless English church people, especially the Catholic-minded clergy and laity, of shame for this sympathy being shown with the Red enemies of the Church, the suppression of facts ; and of our admiration and gratitude for the faithful and splendid stand that is being taken by His Holiness the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church against the common enemy of civilisation and Christendom.”

Sir Francis Lindley, reacted with equal vigour against the attitude which finds expression in the report of the clerical deputation to Red Spain.

“The attitude of some of our highly-placed divines is stupefying, and to me personally, as a life-long member of the Church of England, revolting. The ineptitude of those English clerics who embark on the sea of foreign affairs is of course notorious ; and no one should have been surprised when they worked overtime to advocate a policy which was inevitably bound to lead to the total subjugation of Abyssinia, whose independence they had so much at heart. But I have cudgelled my brains in vain to find the explanation of their support of the so-called Government of Spain. I hesitate to accept the only logical explanation that they do not regard the Catholic Church as a branch of Christianity, or professing Roman Catholics as entitled to the rights enjoyed by the rest of mankind.”

## CHAPTER XI

### THE INCONVENIENT DEAD

*"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. . . ."*

ST. MATTHEW, XI, 22.

*"Unless the parish priest was actively unpopular, he was not killed by his own people. The hatred was much more violent against the religious orders than against the parochial clergy."*

From the report signed by the DEAN OF ROCHESTER (now Bishop of Bath and Wells) and the DEAN OF CHICHESTER.

*"If the religious orders are distrusted, it is not by the poor, the sick or the hungry."*

PROFESSOR ALLISON PEERS.

NOTHING could have been more inconsiderate than the carelessness of the Red Government. Every reasonable man will understand their difficulty in preventing the wholesale massacre of priests who were so deservedly unpopular with their parishioners, but they should have insisted on a fair trial after a *prima facie* case of unpopularity had been established. They would have had no difficulty in producing (or manufacturing) the necessary evidence to prove that these priests had been wicked enough to defend their churches (a Fascist thing to do) or had used their confessionals as ammunition dumps. In this case every reasonable Progressive in England would have been satisfied, but the Spaniards are like that, careless and lazy. They just won't take trouble.

This makes things horribly difficult for their supporters. Here are the Duchess of Atholl, the Dean of

Canterbury, the Dean of Rochester (now Bishop of Bath and Wells) and the Dean of Chichester trying so hard to represent Azana as a sort of Spanish Gladstone, his Cabinet as a kind of National Government, and Caballero as a genial Lansbury, and little help they get from the Valencia Government. Every decent person would have been ready enough to make allowances for the noble rage of a democracy threatened by a military rebellion ; and the legal execution of a few score priests, the murder of perhaps a few hundred, could have been explained away as an excess of otherwise justified anti-clericalism. But there is a way of doing these things, a way that the Red Government has not mastered. According to the highest ecclesiastical authority in Spain about 14,000 priests and monks have been murdered, some of them after cruel physical torture.

The new apologetics, conducted by Christians on behalf of a Government which has murdered Christians, is ingenious. The defence is based on three pleas. The first line of defence is to defame the dead. Priests, unless they were actively unpopular, were not, we are assured, killed by their own people. Popular priests were killed by visiting Anarchists from other parishes.

"The hatred," continues the report, "was much more violent against the religious orders than against the parochial clergy." "If the religious orders are distrusted," wrote Professor Allison Peers in the *Church Times* some years ago, "it is not by the poor, the sick or the hungry." Professor Peers is recognised as one of the greatest modern authorities in Spain. His book, *The Spanish Tragedy*, has been praised as the most scholarly and objective study of the period immediately

preceding the civil war. As an Anglican, he will not be suspected of bias in his generous tributes to the Spanish Church. He states that outside the ranks of professed anti-clericals he has entirely failed to observe any such deeply rooted distrust as their enemies declare they inspire.

The second line of defence is to misrepresent the motive of the persecution. Apologists for Red Spain insist that the persecution of religion in Red Spain is inspired not by hatred of religion but by anti-clericalism.

Professor Peers writes :

“For that it is religion in every form known to them, that the Reds are persecuting, no one who has followed the history of Spain during the last few years with knowledge and understanding can possibly doubt. I am aware that the group of Churchmen who visited two cities of Spain last winter ‘found no evidence of an organized “God-less” propaganda,’ and ‘were unable, on inquiry, to hear of any caricatures of God, of Christ, or of the Virgin and Saints.’ There is much that could be said about this, but the most obvious thing is that they could not have looked very far. Even the respectable caricaturist, Bagaria, whose former newspaper was so moderate in its Republicanism that its enemies among the Left extremists used to say it had been bought by the Jesuits, has begun to amuse himself, in the Barcelona *Vanguardia*, by representing God the Father in a way as humourless as it is irreverent. As for the articles and caricatures in the extremist papers, there is enough of the anti-God movement in them to fill a volume. During the last two decades, I have seen anti-clericalism develop from an idiosyncrasy into a tendency, and from a tendency

into a movement. I have seen the anti-clerical movement widen its scope and grow into an anti-God movement, in which, it is true, anti-clericalism is still the most conspicuous feature, but is clearly recognizable (if I may quote the title of a most revealing article recently published in *Solidaridad Obrera*, and referred to in the *Universe*) as the mask which hides the anti-God face. If the Reds should win, the mask will surely and immediately be removed and the evolution of the anti-God movement will be complete."

Even more striking is the testimony of the Reds, for these inconsiderate folk have a disconcerting habit of contradicting their own supporters. Well-meaning clerical deputations issue their solemn reports, and do everything in their power to prove that these democratic Reds are very fond of God but not at all fond of priests. All of which would be much more convincing had not the Reds anticipated them by explaining that they serve out this sort of dope for the benefit of innocent dupes. Here is an extract from *Solidaridad Obrera* for January 28th 1937. This paper is the organ of the Regional Confederation of Labour in Catalonia, and the mouthpiece of the Spanish National Confederation of Labour.

"It appears that Alvarez del Vayo found himself obliged in the League of Nations to define the limits of our revolution. 'Spain will have,' he said, 'a social democracy and therefore have freedom of religion.' Admirable. We know the value of words used by diplomatists if spoken in Geneva meetings.

"Lenin said that religion was opium. He did not say enough. Opium stupefies, enervates. Little by little it robs man of his organic energies, but it does not go beyond animal physiology.

“ We do not know up to what point we can speak of the ‘ freedom of religion.’ . . . The ‘ freedom for evil ’ is an excessively liberal principle.

“ If we do not allow the freedom of drunkenness, prostitution, suicide, must we allow fanaticism ?

“ It is enough to judge religion by the simple fact of its burnt churches. Not one remains standing, not an effigy remains intact. Hardly a shred remains. With all this they still have pretensions of returning to the Faith. . . .

“ This speech of Alvarez del Vayo with his kind of promise or compromise, that Spain will re-establish the Catholic religion, may have sounded very well in the League of Nations. It appears to have given tone to the discussion ; but here in Spain it makes us smile.”

The third method is to defame the Spanish Church as rich, corrupt, and friend of reactionaries. These charges shall receive a detailed reply in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE SPANISH CHURCH

**T**HERE are certain obvious facts about the Spanish Church which need to be affirmed and reaffirmed. First, Spain is overwhelmingly a Catholic country. Protestants in Spain are scarcely more numerous than members of the Greek Orthodox Church in England. If every Anglican or Nonconformist Church in Great Britain were burned or closed, and a few Greek Orthodox churches left open for propaganda purposes, it would be difficult to convince an intelligent foreigner that Great Britain was not the scene of a violent anti-Christian persecution.

Secondly, no Protestant has been molested by the Nationalists because of his religion. Captain A. H. M. Ramsay, M.P. a Presbyterian Minister and a Member of Parliament, writes as follows in *The Times* :<sup>1</sup>

“ I received to-day a categorical assurance from an unimpeachable source, and with General Franco’s full authority, to the effect that under his régime complete toleration of religious practice and education is to be extended to Protestants in Spain as and when he can make this regulation effective.

“ As a proof I am further informed by the same authority that the Protestant school and church in Salamanca have in the last week or two been handed

<sup>1</sup> July 28th, 1937.



back to Protestant hands and complete liberty of action extended to them."

The national Church in Spain has been, on the evidence of the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent, the victim of a persecution more ruthless, more violent and more thorough than any religious persecution in modern times.

If the ratio of apostates in Red Spain equalled a certain historic ratio of one in twelve there would have been thousands of apostates available to escort deans and duchesses round the territory in which deans and duchesses have been murdered. But the number of such priests can be counted not by the thousand, not by the hundred, not by the score.

The dissident Basque priesthood raises a different problem. They have been disowned by their hierarchy, and they are in no sense representative of Basque Catholicism. Only a minority of Basques are fighting against Franco, and many, perhaps most, of these are Left Wing extremists. The British public, deceived in this as in so many other matters by Red propaganda, were much surprised to discover that the majority of the Bilbao children (devout Catholics for propaganda purposes) greeted their hosts with the clenched fist of the Communist salute.

Of the four Basque provinces Navarre and Alava were solidly behind Franco from the first. Guipuzcoa was divided, and even in the independent republic of Vizcaya there were many Basques who seized the first opportunity to desert to Franco.

In Red Spain the bishops and priests have died like heroes. Hundreds of them have been offered their lives if they would deny Christ, and they have preferred death, and often death by torture. The whole Chapter

of Toledo with the exception of one canon (fifty-six in all) were slaughtered. Not one parish priest is alive in the four Catalan provinces. Eleven Bishops have been martyred, some of them burnt alive. According to the highest ecclesiastical authority in Spain, over ten thousand priests and monks have been murdered. Thousands of nuns have been assassinated and outraged.

The persecution in Red Spain has enriched the Christian martyrology with stories as moving as those which come down to us from the first century of the Christian era. I owe this story to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Gibraltar.

A priest was being led out to his death. He was bound. As he faced the executioners he said, "I want to bless you. Please free my hands."

A Red cut the ropes and then hacked off his hands.

"Bless us now," he sneered.

And the priest did bless them, moving about his bleeding stumps until he died.

It is easy, from the comfort and security of English deaneries, to defame the Church which produced men such as this, but it must be difficult even for the most prejudiced to believe that those who killed such priests were inspired by an enlightened anti-clericalism.

Only the ungenerous minority of invincible bigots will withhold their admiration from the martyrs of Spain, but there are many people, misled by Red propaganda, who sincerely believe that the Spanish Church invited this persecution.

The Church in Spain has been represented as rich in the midst of grinding poverty, as the ally of reaction and as the enemy of progress. The wealth of the Church is a propaganda myth, for the Church has been the

victim of a long series of partial and complete confiscations in the years 1812, 1820, 1835, 1837, 1868 and 1931. The State, having expropriated and disendowed the Church, agreed to pay the stipends of the clergy. Anglicans who have attacked the wealth of the Spanish Church will be consoled to discover that the Primate of Spain receives an income of approximately one-tenth of that of the Primate of Great Britain, and that there are very few Bishops in Spain whose stipends exceed a quarter of those paid to Anglican Bishops. Let us take 1913, the last year before the War, when England was on gold, and the value of the peseta more stable, as a basis of comparison. In 1913 the Primate of Spain received the equivalent of about £1600 a year, and the Bishop of Madrid £1100. Eight Bishops were paid at the rate of £400. Of all the parish priests only fifty were lucky enough to receive an annual grant of £100. Three thousand, four hundred and ninety-five received annual stipends varying from £20 to £25 a year. Additional sources of revenue, such as Mass offerings, very rarely exceeded, and were often considerably less in the aggregate than the official stipend. Spanish priests were overworked and underpaid members of the proletariat.

When the Republic was proclaimed in 1931 almost its first act was to confiscate such Church property as the Church had accumulated since the last spoliation, and to make it clear that in future the State would pay no further stipends to the clergy, stipends which had been paid previously by the State, not as an act of charity but as an act of justice. The new blow was peculiarly mean because many of the Spanish priests had been persuaded to vote for the Republic on the plea that that State would reduce the stipends

paid to the higher clergy and increase the stipends paid to the parish priests. More than a century has passed since the first disendowment of the Church, and in the course of this century the Church has gradually acquired property. It is the poor who have benefited by these new endowments, for the Church has educated more than half of those who have received education, and has been responsible for hospitals and other works of charity on a nation-wide scale. Now these charities cost money, and it is clear that the Church must have acquired funds subsequent to its spoliation. Whence did these funds come? Very largely from religious who entered Religious Orders. Young girls would bring dowries with them, and would resign in favour of the Orders any rights to moneys which they might subsequently inherit. Furthermore, just as charitable people in this country will bequeath or give money to hospitals or schools, so in Spain they would bequeath or give money to the Church, for they knew that a very small proportion of the money thus bequeathed or given would be spent in overhead expenses, and that the Church could be trusted to administer economically the charities which the Church controlled. To describe the Church as "rich," however, is misleading. A trustee is not regarded as rich merely because he administers the estate of a millionaire. The Spanish ecclesiastics were the underpaid trustees of national charity.

The spoliation of the Church has never been a popular movement in Spain. The Spanish people are realists, and discovered early in the last century that it was the poor who suffered when the Church was dispoiled, and the rich Liberals who benefited. A father who has given his daughter a dowry when she

joins a convent, very naturally regards as robbers those who confiscate that dowry along with the other endowments of the convent in question. Spaniards who benefited directly or indirectly from the charitable work of the Church, did not share the enthusiasm with which British Progressives regarded the transfer of money from the Church to the politicians.

During the last century Liberalism has dominated Spanish politics. Spanish Liberalism has always been anti-clerical, and the property of the Church has provided an outlet for the instincts of loot.

"Everything has disappeared into thin air," exclaimed the Duke of Rivas after one of the early spoliations, "the army has not been increased by one battalion, nor the navy by even a barge, nor has the lot of the proletariat been improved."

The record of Liberal Governments in Spain so far as education is concerned has been a record of destruction. The Church was prevented from teaching, and no adequate substitute was provided. In the middle of the nineteenth century the State sonorously proclaimed itself as solely responsible for education, but did little to implement these loud claims, and the actual teaching was very largely done by and at the expense of the religious Orders. They educated more than one-half of those who required education. They did a great deal, and are now attacked because they did not do more. Liberals did very little and expect to be judged not by their record but by their professions.

"Backward as Spain has long been in this respect," writes Professor Allison Peers, "it is hardly possible to imagine in what condition she would be were it not for the labours of the clergy, and, in particular, of the religious Orders." Professor Peers has described the

work of these Orders in a series of interesting articles. He quotes the puzzled exclamation of a former pupil of an Augustinian college.

“ ‘ How can we explain the apparently meaningless hatred of the religious Orders which seems to inspire some of our politicians ? Have they not laboured, and do they not labour, ceaselessly and freely, in the interests of Spanish culture, both in Spain and abroad ? Is the work of these scholars, critics, educators and missionaries nothing but a pious legend ? Do not these literary and scientific works and institutions really exist—these books, in particular, of which the importance and value have been recognized again and again by men whose ideas are completely opposed to those of their authors ? Are not these colleges, laboratories, libraries, reviews—above all, these thousands upon thousands of pupils and students who have benefited from them—palpable realities ? And if we are told that no objection is taken to them as individuals, and they are only to be expelled from Spain because they are members of communities which are thought to be undesirable, is not the reply that, as individuals, they could never have done the great work which they have accomplished, for only when they are organized as a community does it become practically and economically possible ? ’

“ It is well said, and, to a reasonable and unprejudiced person, I think it will seem unanswerable.”

Professor Peers pays a striking tribute to the “ Brothers of the Christian Schools.” He writes :

“ The majority of the Brothers’ schools are situated in the poorer quarters of the great cities, in towns where little other elementary education is to be found, or in mining districts where the population is dense over a

comparatively small area. Many of the schools have been established by private benefaction—some by wealthy individuals who have chosen this method of helping the poor, knowing that their gifts will be well administered; others by industrial concerns which would hardly be accused of sentimentalism. . . . Brothers of the people, indeed, are these—brothers who educate, instruct, train, nurse, console and cheer the poor, the infirm and all who need their care. Their work brings neither to themselves nor to their Orders any such great distinction as comes to the scholars of the religious Orders of which we first wrote. But it forms a firm foundation of charity and devotion without which Spain would be immeasurably poorer. Were these Orders driven from the country, were the endowments given specifically for their work diverted to other purposes, it may be doubted if the work itself would be performed by the State with the same efficiency, or performed at all."

The Church in Spain is hated not for its defects but for its virtues. Anti-clericalism in Spain, as Mr. Douglas Woodruff has justly said, is not the fruit of irritation with supine and hypocritical wealth. "It is," he writes, "the hatred of men who want to impose one set of secular doctrines against those who stand in their path and maintain by example and precept another doctrine and a wholly different view of the purpose of life and the nature of the end of man. It is an involuntary tribute and does honour to the Christians who arouse it and become accounted worthy to suffer great things."

"The Spanish Church," writes Professor Peers, "is credited by its enemies with being over-powerful and over-rich. But its true power and its true riches are

of the kind that no man can take from it : the millions who worship with an intensity and a regularity hard to parallel and the thousands who live saintly lives of devotion."

That Spanish Catholics should support the Nationalists who are fighting to save Christian Spain is not surprising, but it is absurd to deduce from this or from other facts that the Vatican is committed to the support of Fascism. On this question the authoritative pronouncement of the Archbishop of Westminster will command respect. I therefore quote the concluding passage of a letter to *The Times* of which the opening passage has already been quoted in another connection.

" May I take this occasion of replying to ill-informed critics who represent the Church as the secret ally of Fascism. Such persons cannot know the pronouncements of the Popes during the last fifty years. The Church as such is not concerned with political systems, and the Vatican maintains relations with any State which permits Catholics to worship unmolested and to give a Catholic education to their children. The Pope, who was represented at the Coronation of our King George VI, has spoken and speaks frequently in terms of the deepest affection and respect of Great Britain. Those who deduce from the fact that his relations are no less amicable with the Italian State that the Vatican has any special preference for Fascism should reflect that the Vatican has not broken off relations with Valencia in favour of Burgos, that the relations between the Vatican and Nazi Germany are very strained, and that the influence of the Catholic hierarchy in Belgium has been exercised against the Belgian form of Fascism (Rexist).



“ In conclusion, I plead for ‘ sound words,’ for the use of terms in a defined consistent sense. Pius XI, who so strongly condemns totalitarianism, is most unjustly identified with any form thereof ; it is a gross fallacy and a cruel one to dub all those who are opposed to atheistic Communism as Fascists or Nazis. Let us have straight thinking, and in all things charity.”

Nobody denies that Spanish Catholics have always regarded Spanish Liberalism with profound distrust. Nor is this surprising, for Liberalism in Spain has never concealed its hostility to the Church, and few institutions co-operate with their declared enemies. It would be as reasonable to attack the Jews for their very natural hostility to Nazi Germany as to criticize the Spanish Church for her reluctance to support Spanish Liberalism.

And yet human nature is invincibly sanguine. Thousands of simple-minded priests voted for the Republic in 1931 for reasons which I have already mentioned. The Papal Nuncio, Monsignor Tedeschini, and the Spanish hierarchy accepted the Republic in 1931 with an optimism which subsequent events have proved to be tragically mistaken. Even when the Republic resumed the traditional Liberal policy of spoliation and suppression, they still made every effort to work within the framework of the new Constitution for the victory of parties friendly to the Church. It was the refusal of the Church to identify herself with reaction that provoked the anti-clericalism of the Right.

“ I’m a Catholic but I’m violently anti-clerical,” a distinguished Spaniard recently remarked to me. “ All this trouble is due to the Church. The Church was so conciliatory to the Left, so anxious to work with the

Republic, that it never gave Spain a clear lead against the Red peril. Many silly priests voted Republican in 1931, because the Republicans assured them that they would raise their salaries. The Pope, would you believe it, still recognizes the Madrid Government, and still fails to recognize Burgos. We have had Papal Nuncios here who were little better than Socialists."

"I am an anti-clerical," said another Spaniard, "because our ecclesiastics have lost a due sense of the dignity of their position. The Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, who is the Primate of Spain, wrote a personal letter to the self-styled President of the Basque Republic appealing to him to break away from the Madrid Government. If he had to write to that sort of a person, he ought to have got one of his minor canons to sign the letter."

The truth is, that the Church in Spain, like the Church elsewhere, has been prepared to co-operate with any government which guarantees freedom of worship and Christian education for the young. Nobody denies that the Church in Spain, like the Church of England, had its defects, and its policy, like the policy of other Churches, has not always been wise, but when Mussolini accused Anglican prelates of being quicker to detect the mote that is in their brother's eye than the beam in their own, he was voicing a popular continental criticism of that smugness which is the most characteristic British failing. Anglicans who complacently criticize the alleged alliance between the Church in Spain and the ruling powers, ignore the crushing retort to which they expose themselves.

"The Church of England," wrote Dean Inge, "has been freely accused of too great complaisance to the

powers that be, when those powers were oligarchic. Some of the clergy are now trying to repeat rather than redress this error by an obsequious attitude to King: Working-man. . . . The taunt of Helen to Aphrodite in the third book of the *Iliad* sounds very apposite when we read the speeches of some clerical 'Christian Socialists' who find it more exciting to organize processions of the unemployed than to attend to their professional duties. 'Go and sit thou by his side and depart from the way of the gods ; neither let thy feet ever bear thee back to Olympus ; but still be vexed for his sake, and guard him till he make thee his wife, or rather his slave.'

"It is as a slave and not as an honoured help-mate that the Social Democrats would treat any Christian body that helped them to overthrow our present civilization."

Human motives are always mixed, and it is of our most creditable motives that we are most conscious. Few men are cynical in the choice of a political creed, and the tendency of ecclesiastics to swim comfortably with the Left Wing stream is only partially explained in the passage that I have quoted from Dr. Inge. It would be no less unfair to suggest that ecclesiastics are influenced by the fact that progressive views are no disqualification for ecclesiastical promotion. A certain blindness to the sufferings of the poor in Victorian England, or to the sufferings of the Church in modern Spain, cannot be explained by the easy formula : "There are none so blind as those who want Sees."

A report published in a recent book, *Men, Money and Ministry ; A Plea for Economic Reform in the Church of England*, is signed by many Bishops. The Report says,

"The sources of income do not command moral assent. Ninety-nine per cent of the miners throughout the country disapprove of mining royalties. Every miner in the north-east of England knows that the largest share of mining royalties in the north-east goes to the Ecclesiastical Commission. . . ."

The Report mentions the gross disproportion between the stipends of the higher and lower clergy and the tithe problem. Now let us suppose that a "Popular Front" came into power in England and exploited the indignation of the tithe payers, and that, as a result, eleven Anglican Bishops and four thousand of the clergy were murdered and hundreds of churches burned. What should we think of a party of Irish Catholics who on their return from a hasty visit to England smugly assured their fellow-countrymen that these excesses were not due to hatred of religion but to anti-clericalism?

The Church of England is to-day almost the only representative in the world of a national Church which is still mediæval both in wealth and in political power. It preserves the tithes and endowments and the privileged position of the mediæval territorial Church. Nothing, therefore, could have been more inept than the attacks which certain Anglican dignitaries have levelled against the Church in Spain. It is with great pleasure that I quote from a letter written by an Anglican clergyman.

"I want to thank you for your letters to the *Church Times*, and generally for your resolute championship of the Church in Spain against the callous, un-Christian attitude of . . . and . . . towards the Catholics in that unhappy country. I am an Anglican clergyman. . . . I know Spain a little and have always

loved it much. Most English people, unfortunately, have a deep ingrained prejudice against Spain, and especially Spanish religion. . . . The Church in Spain never struck *me* as at all wealthy . . . nothing like so well endowed as the C. of E. Such monasteries as I visited, except pilgrimage centres like Montserrat and the Ignatian shrines, seemed to be struggling for existence. Another accusation, which I think is due to ignorance of the religious history of Spain from the days of Napoleon, is that convents are constantly used for military purposes. In a sense, my own observation confirms this. But I found that these buildings had been confiscated by the State, and turned into barracks and military stores a long way back in time. The French did it at the beginning of last century. The *cathedral* crowning the hill at Lerida in Catalonia, e.g. has been a barracks and fort ever since then. But that is not the fault of the Church. And what the French invader started, the Spanish 'Liberal' Governments under Isabella Segunda were only too ready to go on with. I believe this is the real basis for the pretext that convents and churches must be confiscated, destroyed, or at least closed because they are used for military purposes. When I was in Corunna last November (Franco was in possession there, and the churches were packed), I saw soldiers occupying the convent buildings of the old Dominican priory of San Domingo. But I believe this dates from the expulsion of the friars long long years ago. The *church* itself, as often happens, is still used for worship, but it had a military look-out in its lofty bell tower. . . .

"I used to know (one of these Deans) before he became a dignitary. I also used to know Valencia, and to a less extent, Barcelona, back in the nineties.

I wrote to the dean, after his return from being the guest of the 'lawful Government' in these cities, asking for information as to the real condition of churches there, well known to me, giving him the names. He either could not, or would not, give any. He had been in many churches, but could not remember what they were called. Which does not look as if he had much contact with anyone who had any use for, or interest in, any church. All he told me was that the cathedral at Valencia was structurally intact, but used as a munition store. And that the cathedral at Barcelona has not been destroyed. Not a word about the condition of the churches he had seen, not a single expression of regret or indignation at the outrages perpetrated in connexion with these sacred places. No, whatever the Communists do is right, and whatever the Catholics do is wrong, and what *they* suffer 'serves them right.' I simply can't find words to express my detestation of this attitude. . . . I wish I could 'hope and believe' with you that a united Christian front may be formed against the Communist menace to Religion . . ."

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CHARGES AGAINST THE RED TROOPS

“**A**S far as I can see,” said my friend, “there’s nothing to choose between the Spanish Nationalists and the Reds in this matter of atrocities.”

“But how far can you see?” I asked, “and how far have you tried to see?”

If the “Black Death” which devastated mediæval Europe returned, and if London were decimated by the Plague, and Sussex comparatively immune, a man who remarked airily, “In this matter of plague, there is nothing to choose between the health statistics of Middlesex and Sussex,” would be swept aside as an ignoramus. We are realistic about physical disease because we believe in the body; we are incurious and ineffective about spiritual diseases because it is unfashionable to believe in the maladies of the soul.

The Red Death, which is spreading like a plague over modern Europe, is far more devastating in its effects than the Black Death of the fourteenth century, and we are fighting it with methods compared with which mediæval therapeutics were scientific.

Accurate diagnosis is a prerequisite to scientific cure, and accurate diagnosis is impossible if we begin by denying the existence of the disease. Kindly people who are reluctant to believe that men made in the image of God could be guilty of these outbreaks of

bestial sadism, are apt, in the manner of Christian Science practitioners, to deny the disease which it is our business to cure.

No scientific approach to the pathological problem of Communism is possible unless we are, in the first instance, prepared to face disagreeable facts, and, in the second instance, to approach those facts without attempting to conciliate the mental fashion of the day. Snobbery influences our attitude to atrocities. It is fashionable to affect a broad detachment when atrocities are mentioned (excepting, of course, atrocities in Abyssinia) and to seek refuge from a complicated problem in such facile formulæ as "Six of one and half a dozen of the other."

"Moral Indignation, its cause and cure," was a theme that Oscar Wilde once proposed as suitable for a sociological treatise, a witty crystallization of the *fin-de-siècle* attitude towards moral evil. In the nineties it was modish to register acute distress in the presence of physical ugliness, an unlovely building or a tasteless picture, whereas the correct reaction to moral ugliness was an attitude of cynical detachment. Moral indignation, however, is as rational as æsthetic indignation. And to-day moral indignation has a therapeutic value as a stimulus, for unless our countrymen can be provoked into hard thinking on the subject of Communism, the tragedy of Spain may be re-enacted in England.

My object at the moment, however, is not to provoke moral indignation, but to stimulate the scientific study of the most interesting social phenomenon of our age, the effect of Communist propaganda on a country. The atrocity research which I am anxious to promote has much in common with psychical research.



The investigator is faced with the same difficulty of discovering the substratum of fact beneath the layers of fraud, propaganda, deliberate lying, hysteria and malobservation. Unless he is endowed with that authentic scientific curiosity which is undaunted in the search for truth by the distasteful masks which truth so often wears, he had better abandon this form of research. Those, however, who have the courage to continue their investigations will be rewarded in psychical and in atrocity research by the discovery and establishment of truths of considerable value to the philosopher and to the social historian.

The atrocities with which we are concerned in this investigation may be broadly classified as follows :

(1) Deterrent executions, that is to say, executions without due process of trial, intended to intimidate a hostile population or a hostile section of a friendly population.

(2) Reprisal executions, motivated by revenge for atrocities, real or alleged, committed by the other side.

(3) Terroristic massacres.

(4) Sadism, that is, cruelty for the sake of cruelty, torture, mutilation, etc., and executions not by shooting, but by burning alive, etc.

Deterrent executions are born of fear, as for example, when a small invading force shoots hostages in order to intimidate *franc-tireurs*, but the terroristic massacre is not directed against those who are regarded as potential assassins or *franc-tireurs*, but against defenceless victims, women, old men, or priests. A terroristic massacre is, as we shall see in due course, a recognized method advocated by Communists for the establishment of a Red Dictatorship.

The case against the Reds is, that whereas deterrent

executions and reprisal executions are characteristic of most wars, terroristic massacres and sadism on a large scale are virtually unknown in wars between civilized powers, but are associated with all Communist outbreaks, whether in Russia, or for the brief period of Communist rule in Bavaria, in Hungary during the Bela Kun régime, in Mexico, or in Red Spain.

Our next task is to classify the evidence on which our conclusions must be based.

Witnesses may be divided into three classes :

(1) Friendly witnesses who are or who were once strongly biassed in favour of those whom they now charge with atrocities.

(2) Neutrals with no bias one way or the other.

(3) Unfriendly witnesses with an obvious bias against those accused of atrocities.

It is easy to prove the case against the Reds without calling a single witness from those who were among the declared supporters of Franco at the beginning of the Civil War.

Men who have been extravagantly praised by our progressive Press in the days when they were the leaders of the Left, have been driven by sheer horror of the Red Terror into the opposition camp. Men like the late Dr. Unamuno, Rector of Salamanca, the opposite number in Spain to Liberal University teachers like Professor Gilbert Murray ; N. Alcala Zamora, President when the Popular Front assumed power ; Salvador S. de Madariaga, one of the leading Spanish Liberals ; Dr. Gregorio Mara  n, President of the Academy of Medicine at Madrid, imprisoned as a Radical under Primo de Rivera ; and Alexander Lerroux, the doyen of Spanish Radicals, the Lloyd George of Spain, and a former Premier of the Spanish

Republic, have all testified to the truth. Bloomsbury, which idolized these men, never mentions them to-day.

Lerroux records the fact that the Red Terror took an even heavier toll of Radicals than of priests, and writes as follows :

“Twenty centuries of Christianity, forty centuries of civilization and progress, have not yet been able to raise the moral or improve the intellectual standing of a whole class of men. That class has been poisoned in modern times by an indigestion of doctrines that prove incomprehensible to their primitive intelligence, and unassimilable by them in their low stage of culture, deadened as their intellects have been and their nature rendered dull by the selfish indifference of the privileged classes. This sorry human beast, abandoned by God and man, on finding himself free can only sting and use his venom like a viper.”

No less impressive than the evidence of this converted Radical is the testimony of Cornelius Vanderbilt, whose *Farewell to Fifth Avenue* is a brilliant attack on the New York aristocracy into which he was born. Cornelius Vanderbilt is often accused of Communistic leanings. Be that as it may, nobody would accuse him of any sympathy with Fascism or the Catholic Church.

“One night at Palou, near Barcelona,” he wrote in the American paper *Liberty*, “I heard a howling mob around a bend in the road. A few minutes later there came straggling down the roadway a tattered rabble, brandishing sticks and knives and rusty rifles. Some of them were bellowing the ‘Internationale.’ With them were two oxen, and behind the oxen, chained and roped together, were three or four cowled monks, one of whom they had already beheaded. . . . Once I saw two monks who had already been crucified.

Their faces were twisted as if the pain had been unbearable. Large railroad spikes had been driven through their shrivelled stomachs, and dried blood covered their legs. . . . At Molins del Rey, I saw a lot of tonsured monks being carried in a manure wagon pulled by a raving mob of ragged boys and girls, mind you, through the village streets. Running along beside the wagon were little girls with pointed sticks which they savagely jabbed into the monks' flesh. At Marquina, held by the Governmentalists, I saw nuns shackled to one another's ankles being dragged by lively mules through the cobblestone streets, the whole tops of their heads ablaze. I was told they had been dipped in kerosene and touched off with long, white church tapers."

Horace W. Abrams, photographer for the Keystone View Company, contributes this picture along with others: "I also photographed a little girl. The Reds chopped off her leg by the thigh because they found out her father was fighting with the rebels. You can guess what they did to the mother, who was quite young. She died."

Neither the *New York Times* nor its correspondent is sympathetic to Fascism, and the evidence of Joseph Lee Mason, writing in the *New York Times* of September 13th, 1936, is therefore impressive.

"As we passed the parish church (at El Saucejo) we saw the body of the priest, Father Jose de la Cora, crucified, head down, on the main door. The body was clad in ceremonial vestments. The body of his brother, Ramon de la Cora, was lying in front of the church door. He had been shot dead by the Communists. . . . While accompanying a patrol searching houses in Almorgen, we found three nuns of the

Carmelite Order in a house that had been ransacked by the Communists. Two of the nuns were dead. The third, Madre Rosa, was alive, but her face had been slashed with knives. . . . At Almorgen was also found an insurgent soldier who had been held a prisoner by the Communists. Both of his eyes had been gouged out, his face was slashed and his fingers had been cut off."

I commend to the reader two pamphlets published by Burns Oates, *Communist Operations in Spain*, and *Spain under Communist Control*. These scholarly and well documented studies of Communist methods in Spain, by G. M. Godden, refute the silly fiction that Red excesses were isolated incidents in the early days of the Civil War. Red atrocities were the cause, rather than the consequence, of the Franco rising. These studies in Communist technique are valuable as an exposure of the system behind these outrages, a deliberate and planned terrorism by which Moscow prepares for the seizure of power. The outrages were not isolated and unplanned but general and continuous. The evidence cited in support is the evidence of British eyewitnesses such as the chairman of the British Residents Emergency Committee in Madrid, and the uncensored despatches of a fair and unbiassed *Times* correspondent in Madrid, who is quoted again and again. Crucifixion, soaking in petrol and burning alive of men, women and children, these things are not isolated acts of a madman, but the routine of Communist terrorism. The case against the Reds in this matter of atrocities is proved long before we need appeal to the official reports issued by the Burgos Government.

Certain conclusions emerge from a study of the Red

terror. The brutality of the Roman world into which Christ was born is returning. Torture, which was slowly disappearing from a world influenced but never dominated by the Christian ethos, is reappearing, and it is no coincidence that this recrudescence of sadism should coincide with outbursts of that Communism which is directed by the only State which has formally adopted militant atheism as its creed.

People who like to assure us that "it does not matter what a man believes provided that he is kind" are beginning to wonder whether people will continue to be kind after they have ceased to believe. Events in Spain suggest a somewhat closer connection between creed and code than the moralizing agnostics of the Victorian age were prepared to concede. Garcia Oliver, Minister of Justice in the Government of Valencia, said at a public meeting :<sup>1</sup>

*"Man comes not from God but from the beasts ; that is why his reactions are those of a beast."*

Garcia Oliver is more scientific than the amiable sceptics in England who evade the logical conclusions of their creed.

*"Why punish prostitution when it should be legally organized?"*

Quite so, and as the Dean of Canterbury remarked, "the determination to provide the utmost cultural as well as physical opportunities to all, gives promise of the realization of a social order nearer to the intention of Christ than anything I have seen in Spain during any of my previous visits."

And this is how Oliver proposes to carry Christ's intentions into effect.

*"The courts of Justice are not to be merely popular, but primitive tribunals."*

<sup>1</sup> Reported in *El Diluvio*, January 1st 1937.

But, of course, as the Dean of Canterbury remarked, "It does not matter what they say with their lips, it is what they mean in their hearts."

The meeting at which Garcia Oliver delivered himself of these views was presided over by the Minister of Propaganda. But it would seem that a verbatim report of the meeting was not considered suitable propaganda for itinerant clerics.

Even if every charge against the Nationalists could be proved, it would still be necessary on two vital points to draw the sharpest distinction between the Nationalists and the Reds. First there is the question of motive. Nationalists execute individuals if proved guilty of crimes, but are not waging war on any particular class of society. The Nationalist army is democratic in the proper sense of the term, for it includes representatives of *every* social class from aristocracy to proletarians and peasants. The Reds, on the other hand, advocate class war, and have put into practice the first postulate of the Marxist revolution, the liquidation of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie.

In spite of the differences between the Communists and Anarchists on other points, both Communists and Anarchists accept this fundamental premise of class war. On the Red side you find powerful parties who advocate the extermination of a class as an essential means to an essential end. On the Nationalist side no individual, whatever his class, is in danger unless proved guilty of crime, and any individual, whatever his class, is liable to be executed if he is charged and convicted of certain offences.

Secondly there is the question of scale. The correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, whose sympathies are strongly with the Left, asserts that

the number of those executed in Madrid alone cannot be much less than 40,000. Mr. Arthur Bryant who, as an historian, is well accustomed to weigh evidence, and who has compared the estimates formed by correspondents in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and other cities, and examined a number of documents bearing on this point, writes as follows :—

“Red Spain is not a constitutional democracy. It is an inferno. Since last July some 350,000 non-combatant men, women and children, living helpless in that corner of the Iberian peninsula subject to the rule of what is euphemistically called the Valencia Government, have been butchered in cold blood under conditions of indescribable horror.”

It is interesting to compare these estimates with the estimates of executions by the Spanish Inquisition. Lea, the Protestant historian of the Inquisition, accuses Llorente, a bitter enemy of the Inquisition, of gross exaggeration in his estimates, but let us accept Llorente's estimates for the purpose of comparison. His “extravagant guesses,” to quote Lea, give 31,912 as the grand total of victims executed by the Inquisition from its foundation in 1480 up to 1808, a total of 328 years. Fewer people were executed by the Inquisition in the whole of Spain over three centuries than were murdered in Madrid in the first three months of the war.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE PRISONER WHO PLEADED GUILTY

“ONE doesn’t know what to believe. Both sides accuse each other of atrocities.”

Yes, and criminals frequently accuse the police of rough treatment.

One *does* know what to believe, for the criminal who pleads guilty in the face of overwhelming evidence is seldom acquitted by the jury, and the guilt of the Reds is removed from the realm of opinion to the realm of fact by their own admission.

The Nationalist Government in Burgos published in October 1936 a preliminary official report on the atrocities committed by the Reds. The Spanish Embassy in London issued a reply. The Embassy “has not denied nor denies now that there have been excesses in the repressive conduct of the Government forces.” The Embassy adds, “The Spanish Embassy in London does not, in fine, contradict the rebel pamphlet.”

The *New Statesman* of November 14th, 1936, says : “I am not on the strength of this going to deny that many and atrocious things have been done on the Government side ; they themselves with regret admitted as much, and so, for all I know, the greater part of the events described in this report are true.”

The Red atrocities are therefore an accepted fact.

The "Rebel Pamphlet" which the Spanish Embassy accepts as true deserves examination.

The conscientious student engaged in this unpleasant form of research will compare the Burgos Report with the Bryce Report on German atrocities issued during the war. I re-read the Bryce Report recently, and I am not surprised that it has fallen into deserved disrepute. The very discredit which the Bryce Report so justly has incurred has proved of immense value to the Valencia Government. The Bryce Report, people argue, is a tissue of falsehoods, therefore the Burgos Report is probably equally false. But whereas the Germans indignantly repudiated the Bryce Report, the Spanish Embassy did not dare contradict the Burgos Report.

Even apart from this admission the superiority of the Burgos Report is patent. The Burgos Report is based on investigations at the places where atrocities have taken place. The Bryce Report is based on the examination of witnesses who had escaped from occupied territories in which the Germans were accused of atrocities. Very few names of witnesses are given in the Bryce Report, and the vaguest and wildest statements are solemnly recorded. The Burgos Report is precise. The names of victims and the dates and places of their execution are recorded. Facts are testified to by witnesses whose names are given in the report.

Let us apply to the Bryce Report the same criterion which I proposed for our examination of Red atrocities. Let us dismiss the unsupported statements of witnesses who must, in the nature of things, be biassed against those who are charged with these crimes. Let us base our case solely on "friendly witnesses" and

“neutral witnesses.” What remains? Very little, but enough to refute the suggestion that the Bryce Report is completely worthless. We may classify as friendly witnesses the written admissions of German prisoners and German dead which have been found in their diaries, and from these documents certain facts emerge beyond dispute. The Germans were undoubtedly fired on by civilians on certain occasions, and it is no less certain that in the confusion of darkness and battle they sometimes attributed to *franc tireurs* shots which were fired by their own troops, and it is beyond doubt that savage reprisals were sometimes exacted for breaches, real or imaginary, of the code of war.

The facts and photographs in the Burgos Report are not contradicted by the Spanish Embassy. What is the story told by these facts and these photographs? First, that the Reds are not content to kill, but that in many cases they take a sadistic delight in torture. The obscene ingenuity of certain tortures (e.g. No. 31, page 67) is clearly pathological. Among the more horrible photographs in this Report is a photograph of the charred corpses of persons burned alive at Talavera.

The second fact that emerges is that these atrocities were inflicted not only on the rich but on the poor. Talavera, where I spent three days, is a small town mainly inhabited by poor people. The Burgos Report includes a poignant photograph of the bodies of seventeen proletarians who were murdered and thrown out into one of the streets of Talavera.

The first Burgos Report gives the names of eight paupers living in an old people's home, whose ages varied from 62 to 87. They were all killed with axes.

I conclude this chapter with a series of characteristic extracts from that first Burgos Report which the Spanish Embassy did not contradict. I quote nothing from the second and subsequent reports. My case against the Reds, I cannot too strongly insist, is based partly on witnesses who may be presumed to be or to have been friendly to the Reds and partly on the Burgos Report which has not been contradicted by the Spanish Embassy.

“On Wednesday, July 22nd, the day on which the Nationalist troops entered Arahál, the revolutionaries, seeing that their position was hopeless in face of the oncoming troops, perpetrated a crime which has aroused the most widespread indignation throughout Spain. They despatched a band of desperadoes to the building in which they had confined their prisoners, and, throwing buckets of petrol through the windows, set fire to it. Twenty-three people were thus burnt alive, and only one, Father Antonio Ramos Ramos, managed to escape, though badly burnt about the face and hands. The revolutionaries then fled, taking the keys of the prison with them to prevent the oncoming relief from rendering speedy aid to their victims. The Nationalist soldiers and Civil Guards who came to the rescue had to break down the doors with axes and picks.”

“On August 16th, at three o'clock, the Communist murderers began to throw hand grenades at the door of the school in order to terrify the prisoners and in the hope that, by a natural impulse to save themselves from the bombs, they would be driven into the very small courtyard at the back of the building. This was, in fact, what happened. As they ran out, a section of the revolutionaries' riflemen, stationed on

the roofs of the adjoining houses, riddled them with bullets. The wretched and terrified victims, faced on the one side with the intense bombardment from the street, and on the other with the hail of bullets which met them when they entered the courtyard, were all thus exterminated in agony and confusion."

"One man, whose name is not known, but who is alleged to have been a Fascist, was tied to an armoured car belonging to the revolutionaries, who thus dragged him through the streets, then castrated him, and finally burnt him."

"A peculiarly futile and senseless atrocity occurred when, in the full flush of their triumph, the revolutionaries decided to shoot every man in the place who, since the establishment of the republic in Spain, had been married in church by a priest. This was duly carried out in spite of the fact that among the advocates of this revolting futility were many who had been canonically married themselves."

"The revolutionaries, discovering that the Nationalist troops were approaching, resolved to butcher their prisoners. A woman called Concepcion Velarde Caraballo, alias 'La Caraballa,' was to the fore in urging the men to burn the gaol, and herself carried up the petrol. The prisoners were rounded-up in the small courtyard of the gaol and shot down, and, when all had fallen dead or wounded, their bodies were soaked with petrol and burnt, some of them while still alive.

"When the Civil Guards arrived with the entry of the Nationalist troops, they actually witnessed several victims still writhing in the flames."

"Ten persons were committed, six of them being burnt alive. Twenty buildings were also deliberately

set on fire. . . . On the eve of the entry of the Nationalist troops into Campillo, the revolutionaries set about destroying the prison by raining bombs on it while it was being fired. To make trebly sure that their victims should not escape, they also opened the prison doors and kept up a continuous rifle fusillade on any persons attempting to get out that way. In the end all the prisoners were either killed or wounded among the flames, but the executioners, noticing that there was a little life left in Dalmacio del Aguila Aguilar, and in Rafael Lopez, killed off the former with dagger-thrusts and the latter by placing two bombs between his thighs and exploding them."

"Many families had all their menfolk rounded up, and in most cases they were killed after revolting tortures. Cartloads of these wretched victims were taken at dawn to the cemetery, where they were made to dig a huge grave. Then the murderers fired on them, but they were careful to shoot them in the legs, so that they were not killed outright but fell writhing into the grave. Some were then buried alive and others left to linger in agony on the ground, where their cries and groans made the days and nights hideous, as they slowly died. The people living in the immediate neighbourhood, threatened with death themselves if they went to the aid of these unfortunate creatures, fled from their homes rather than endure these ghastly sights and sounds. Many of them have provided irrefutable evidence of these horrors, evidence grimly confirmed by the subsequent discovery of bodies with clenched hands protruding from the earth, and other cases where the wounded man had, by a supreme effort, managed to get his head above ground, and then could do no more.

"When the revolutionaries committed these murders, they always took with them two prisoners from among those remaining in the prison, as witnesses. These latter were then sent back to the prison with promises that their lives would be spared, and thus arousing hopes which the passing of a few days always proved to be false. Where, as in many cases entire families were in prison, the usual procedure was to shoot one member of the family each day, starting with the sons and finishing up with the father, in order to give the maximum of mental anguish in addition to physical torture.

"Of the 28 Civil Guards, only eight have survived. They pierced the eyes of one of them, Augustin Menacho, with a needle, and then shot him. The total number of anti-Communists and Civil Guards killed in Lora del Rio was 138.

"These facts have been gathered from the statements of a number of responsible witnesses who were present at the events described. Among them is the magistrate of Lora del Rio, Don Eugenio Pico Martin, who was arrested during the first few days of the revolutionary occupation, but was later set free on condition that he reported daily to the Soviet. Another is one of the surviving Civil Guards of Lora, Cristobal Calvante Granados. A third is Don Jose Maria Linan, local leader of the Spanish Phalanx. He was taken prisoner from the beginning of the upheaval and was to have been shot on the night of the day when the Nationalist troops arrived to liberate the village."

"Donna Blanca de Lucia, a widow of sixty-two, a chemist, was murdered in peculiarly revolting circumstances. A number of men burst into her house, accompanied by one woman. The latter stripped

Donna Blanca, who was at once outraged by one of the ruffians. They then allowed her to dress on condition that she went away at once to Penafior on foot. As she made to leave the house they shot and severely wounded her. They then tied a heavy stone round her neck, dragged her to the river and threw her in."

"The remaining victims were murdered by means of the procedure which the butchers called 'the little walk.' This consisted in walking them through the streets to be subjected to the most abject humiliations on the part of the revolutionary rabble and then having them shot dead by lads from 16 to 18 years of age."

"The family of Don Cristobal Romero Martel, well known in the village for their piety and charity, were besieged in their own house for five days by the Communist rabble. Because of their high religious principles, and because they could not bring themselves to believe that the mob would really murder them after all the help and kindness received at the hands of the family in the past, this gentleman and his two sons, although armed, refrained from killing any of their besiegers and confined themselves to passive resistance. On the fourth day of the siege, the incendiary bombs of the attackers set fire to the house, while a band of ruffians broke down the doors and began to loot and destroy the place. Señor Romero, with his wife, his two sons, and their fiancées, then fled to the roof of the house, but their adversaries followed, and two men of the party were cruelly murdered in spite of the tears and prayers of the women, who vainly tried to shelter them in their arms. The ladies, by a miracle, escaped unharmed, except the mother, who had bullet



wounds in the face. Old Don Cristobal, with a fractured skull and one eye half out of its socket, still remained alive, but the murderers were insatiable. They fell upon him with axes, encouraging a boy of twelve to rain blows upon the dying man, who finally expired asking pardon for his murderers."

## CHAPTER XV

### CHARGES AGAINST THE NATIONALIST TROOPS

profound knowledge of human nature would have been necessary to foresee the practice which the Valencia Government would adopt once the Government realized that it was useless to deny that appalling atrocities had been committed in Red Spain. Their only hope of distracting attention from their own crimes was to fabricate Nationalist atrocities. Such tactics had every chance of success in England, for they appeal to our British love of a compromise, and they flatter our national vanity. It is pleasant to feel that Englishmen are divided not only from Spanish Communists but from Spaniards as a whole by a moral gulf. This conviction is reinforced by the formula, "Six of one and half a dozen of the other."

Those who have not the leisure to examine the evidence should withhold judgment. They should not accuse either side of atrocities unless they are prepared to back up this accusation with facts. Nobody is under any obligation to express an opinion on the charges and counter-charges of atrocities, but it is unfair to brand all Spaniards indiscriminately as guilty of odious crimes merely because one cannot be bothered to examine the available evidence.

The most popular of all Red myths is the famous

massacre at Badajoz, not, of course, the historical massacre by Wellington's troops in the Peninsula War, but the fictitious massacre by the Nationalists. This myth was exposed in *Time*, an American weekly paper by no means friendly to Franco :

“ ‘The day of the capture of Badajoz ’ (by the Whites), declared *World Trend Features*, ‘the figure of two thousand Reds shot was given by the French Havas correspondent who was not there but in Portugal. All over the world this figure was taken up and printed. Next day John Elliott, of the *New York Herald Tribune*, was the first American correspondent, and probably the first non-Spanish correspondent, to enter Badajoz. He saw no signs of the shootings, so didn't report them. By some of his own *Herald Tribune* colleagues he was promptly condemned for ‘having sold out to the Fascists.’ Each of the great international Press Services is faking in its Paris bureau, and each says it has to do so to keep up with the ‘colourful competition ’ of the others.’ ”

I have already quoted from *Three Pictures of the Spanish War*, in which a supporter of Franco and a supporter of the Red Government state their case, and in which “Don Justo Medio ” sums up as a Liberal who dislikes Fascism and Communism. And this is what this impartial Spaniard says :

“About nothing have wilder statements been made than about the mass executions carried out by the insurgents. I have compared, for example, all available accounts in Spanish, French or English, eleven in number, of the alleged mass of executions at Badajoz in August, 1936. The total number of persons alleged to have been executed varies from four hundred to 2500 ; the contradictory accounts of the executions fall into

three well-marked groups ; two different places were given where the executions are supposed to have been perpetrated ; while several accounts, deficient also in other essential details, give no place at all."

The death blow to the Badajoz legend is provided by Major Geoffrey McNeill-Moss in his fine book, *The Epic of the Alcazar*. This massacre was reported in the *New York Herald Tribune*, under the signature of Reynolds Packard, who was never in Badajoz, and was in Portugal at the time the mythical massacre was reported. His story was telegraphed all over the world. He has since protested vigorously against the misuse of his name, which was attached to a fake report written by the Reds. "The official correspondents of the Havas Agency," to whom similar telegrams were attributed, "seem to have had somewhat the same sort of trouble as Mr. Packard." For a detailed analysis of their reports and disclaimers see *The Epic of the Alcazar*.

Second only in popularity to the myth of Badajoz is the legend of Guernica. Here is Mr. Douglas Jerrold's analysis of the Guernica story.

"Firstly, Guernica is a strategic position of considerable importance. Secondly, it is the centre of an important part of the Basque small-arms industry. Thirdly, by the official admission of the Mayor, in his statement issued by the Bilbao Government and communicated to the Press all over the world, Guernica was full of troops when it was bombed. Fourthly, Guernica was bombed in the proper course of the operations against Bilbao, but it was not bombed on the day that it was burnt, and it was burnt by the retreating Basque (or, more probably, by the Asturian) troops, and not by the Nationalist forces.

"Let us examine the evidence for these statements

“No evidence is required for the first two. The strategic importance of Guernica is obvious to any soldier who looks at the map. That it is surrounded by small-arms factories is also a matter of established fact. The owners of these factories, incidentally, have for years been supplying arms to terrorists and other illegal organizations all over Europe and Asia. But what of the Dean of Valladolid, who was in the town when it was burnt ; of *The Times* correspondent, who saw the aeroplanes *en route* : of the two German airmen, whose diaries with military conciseness contained the simple word ‘Guernica’ against the required date ?

“As regards the Dean of Valladolid, the ecclesiastical authorities in Valladolid say that the priest in question is not the Dean. Nor is the case for his veracity improved by the discovery that he is the author of another account of the bombardment appearing under another signature, and confirming that which appeared under his own name. *The Times* correspondent was in Bilbao when, like everyone else there, he heard accounts of Guernica. He went to Guernica in the small hours of the following morning. His first excited account began with the statement that the town was completely destroyed, but that the deaths were, fortunately, small. They could hardly have been small if the town had been slowly, systematically, pounded to pieces. They might have been if it was being fired and mined. He was eight and a half miles away from Guernica when he ‘saw’ the aeroplanes, and he was certainly in Bilbao when he wrote his despatch. As to the Germans, we have no right whatever to accept the reports of their evidence, but there is no reason to doubt that they bombed Guernica on occasions. It had been bombed intermittently for several days before it was given up.

“On the other side, the evidence is, as near as may be, conclusive. The correspondents of the Havas agency, of *The Times*, and of several other newspapers have affirmed positively that most of the damage which they saw was wrought not by bombing, but by deliberate destruction by fires from the ground. The statements are explicit. There were only a few bomb holes, and the walls of the houses in the quarter most completely destroyed bear no marks of bomb splinters. Nor can the damage done by a bomb and that done by dynamiters and incendiaries be confused by any competent observer.

“And yet, without this testimony from *The Times* correspondent and other neutral journalists, I should feel justified in denying the charge of wanton destruction for quite different reasons. Firstly, I have seen the destruction at Irun, which was admittedly wrought by the same army, under the same leadership, as that which was defending Guernica : a complete street—the principal street of the town—systematically destroyed, house by house, with only the walls left standing, and the interiors completely gutted by fire. A rain of bombs might, in loose journalistic parlance, ‘destroy’ a whole street in a town, but it would not destroy it *in that way*. At Guernica, as at Irun, there is hardly a mark in the street. A ‘rain of bombs’ would fall as often in the streets and gardens as on the houses, and must leave traces which could not possibly be obliterated. The roadway would be destroyed, the flowers would be withered. Secondly, people who talk about destruction from the air have no idea of the local effect of a bomb. I have seen, at Malaga and elsewhere, the effect of bombs on a score of houses. A bomb falling from a height will tear its

way through a house and explode, leaving half the house standing. That part of the house which it hits, however, will be totally destroyed ; the burst will be outwards as well as upwards, and the outside walls will never be left intact. To destroy an entire small town, however, as part of Irun was destroyed, not hundreds, but thousands, of bombs would be required. The resources for such wholesale destruction are entirely lacking to either side in this war. Apart altogether from the question of expediency, such destruction would mean using a month's supply of ammunition for General Franco's entire army, and denuding all fronts of air protection to indulge in an orgy of lunatic folly.

"And again, Eibar was also, and admittedly, burnt. It was never suggested by Bilbao that it had even been severely bombed till two days after the Guernica story had shocked the world. Yet eye-witnesses report that the damage at Eibar is of precisely the same kind as that at Guernica.

"Finally, the question can be cynically determined by reference to that old question, '*cui bono?*' When the alleged destruction of Guernica took place it was in process of being evacuated ; an advance had taken place on all fronts, and nothing could have saved the town. General Franco had nothing whatever to gain by destroying it. The Basque Government, if they could get their story accepted, had everything to gain. The 'incident' would stiffen the resistance of the Catholic Basques. It would influence neutral opinion ; strengthen the attitude of the British Government in regard to the blockade of Bilbao, and possibly even lead to its abandonment."

A distinguished and senior officer in the Air Force

tells me that it is impossible in modern war to draw any ethical distinction between one kind of target and another. Every town contains citizens who are contributing to the conduct of the war either by making munitions or by contributing to the essential supplies. He tells me that professional airmen are mildly contemptuous of the nonsense talked by civilians on this subject. In the next war we shall probably begin by attempting to destroy the enemy's aerodromes, but we shall certainly not refrain from bombing his towns if there is any advantage to be gained thereby.

Let us clear our minds of cant, even if we don't like Franco.

I visited Avila and Talavera, which are open towns, shortly after they were bombarded, and I was in Malaga, where no troops were visible, within a few hours of Malaga being shelled from the sea. I should have felt no particular grievance against the Reds had I been bombed from the air.

A Red defeat is always accompanied by a spate of atrocity stories. And the fall of Madrid will probably prove true to type. The Reds will have broadcast their myths almost before the city surrenders. Some popularity-seeking cleric will scold Franco from the pulpit and in the Press, and a week or two later the true account of what has happened will be issued from Salamanca and published in small print on a back page.

The Spanish Embassy in London published a statement during November 1936, the general accuracy of which may be judged by the importance which it attaches to the Badajoz myth. To this statement the Marquis Merry del Val replied in an article in the *Nineteenth Century* for March 1937. I regard the



Marquis, of course, as counsel and not as a witness, a distinction which has been stressed in the preface.

"After all," he writes, "which are the accusations against General Franco? The most authoritative indictment of his conduct is to be found in the 'Statement' published from the Spanish Embassy in London. It is the only charge-sheet bearing the seal of an official body. The atrocities therein enumerated can be divided into the following two categories: a list of individual cases, only eight in all, and a series of mass atrocities comprising a total of eighteen. In point of numbers these supposed misdeeds of Franco's forces may aptly be termed microscopical by comparison with those admittedly the work of members of the Spanish Popular Front. Add to this difference between the two sides—all to Franco's advantage—that the allegations made in the Embassy Statement are not founded on a formal investigation or accompanied by the proof of reliable evidence. At most they are mere unsubstantiated assertions of irresponsible people. Those who recorded and repeated them are not in a position to verify them because the facts adduced are supposed to have happened in territories to which they had no access, being in their opponents' possession. Their value therefore amounts to that of unreliable hearsay. What face value it may offer at first sight disappears on account of its continual equivocation. Let us be more precise.

"After some vague and inaccurate generalisations, the Statement declares that all workers carrying a trade union card are shot by General Franco's men. The chief objection to be made here is the non-existence in Spain of trade unions in the English sense of the term other than those formed by Catholic workmen

under the name of *Sindicatos de Obreros Cristianos*, most meritorious and courageous, but relatively limited in numbers. The associations designated under the title of unions in the Embassy Statement are purely political in their aims and organisation. They consist of two great corporations. One of them comprises the Communist (formerly Socialist) workers. Its name is *Union General de Trabajadores* (General Union of Workers), familiarly known by the corresponding initials, U.G.T. The other unites the men who profess Anarcho-Syndicalist doctrines, styling itself *Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores* (National Confederation of Workers). It is for brevity's sake designated as C.N.T. Its ruling committee, the F.A.I. (*Federación Anárquica Iberica* : Iberian Anarchist Federation), bears a name which strikes terror into the heart of most Spaniards. If 'ruthless' be the qualification fitted for the U.G.T., 'bloodthirsty' does not sufficiently describe the F.A.I. The members of both these associations are recruited by methods more closely resembling coercion than persuasion, the flourish of a pistol being one of the most frequent. They are inscribed on the rolls without the slightest regard to their trade. One and the other furnish gunmen for *social* crimes, voters for the elections, and militiamen for the front. These three seem the only activities of the U.G.T., the C.N.T., and the F.A.I. To belong to any of these three justifies vehement suspicion of criminality ; membership of the last makes it certain. As a consequence, both the general accusation made by the Embassy Statement and the particular case of the town of El Carpio mentioned therein, but omitting the fact that all these men were either killed while firing on the troops or after trial by court-martial, acquire a very different aspect. When

quoting the cases of the villages of Constantina, Carmona, Posada, Palma del Rio, Peñafior, Alanis, Cazalla, Puebla de los Infantes, Villanueva de las Minas, Pedroso and La Campana, the Embassy Statement prefaces its charges by remarking that they harboured no troops. It omits to say that in all these places Franco's forces encountered a determined resistance on the part of armed men, who can claim to be troops with the same right as those defending Madrid, for one and all are merely the mob armed by the Government of the Popular Front. Neither does it make the slightest reference to the dreadful crimes against life and property of which this scum of the countryside appears convicted in the report of General Franco's investigation committee.

"We encounter the same *suppressio veri* in the individual cases specified by the Statement. The 'Socialist' (read 'Communist') lawyers J. A. Manso, Rufilanchas, and Landovre, as also the poet Garcia Lorca, whose literary merits were outshone by his political zeal, were all dangerous agitators who abused their talent and superior education to lead the ignorant masses astray for their own personal profit. In common with the other persons named, they were executed after a trial by court-martial. It remains, however, to be shown that all these allegations are well-founded, for, as we have already remarked, proof of none of them being given, they rank with mere gossip or current news. The majority of the descriptions published in this pretentious document are so reminiscent of the atrocities discovered in most localities by Franco's advancing troops that we may well ask ourselves whether we are not witnessing, as we read, the employment of a common trick of Bolshevik

propagandists, consisting in foisting on their adversaries the guilt which is their own. Such a suspicion is warranted by the fantastic assurance of the execution in the city of Seville of 9,000 workers and peasants and the throwing of hand grenades into the workmen's humble homes when the town was cleverly mastered by General Queipo de Llano without firing a shot, to the satisfaction of its inhabitants, reflected by the fact that 5,000 of them immediately volunteered for active service.

"More than *suggestio falsi*, the Statement has recourse here to open misrepresentation. It is the same when it repeats the well-worn story of the wholesale killing of 2,000 men in the bull-ring at Badajoz. As a reputable journalist, Captain Francis McCullagh, has explained, no British or American correspondent has reported this supposed atrocity imagined by the fervid brain of certain Portuguese auxiliaries of the Havas Agency, whose representative telegraphed their fantastic information to headquarters although far from Badajoz at the time.

"The same can be said of two other accusations not taken up in the Embassy Statement. One is the supposed 'elimination' of 1,500 rebellious miners at Rio Tinto, specifically contradicted by the company's officials. The other is the shooting of Red militiamen found in the beds of the San Bernardo Hospital at Toledo, feigning to be wounded after firing from the windows on General Franco's soldiers. As violators of the rules of war they richly deserved their fate.

"Lastly, it is interesting to note here that the Nationalists do not indulge in the inhuman habit of arresting defenceless and inoffensive men, women and children in their homes or the street to hold them as

hostages ready for sacrifice if the Nationalists successfully carry out a military operation and as a perpetual threat to curtail their opponents' liberty of action. It is possible that when such a threat is made some Nationalist general may have attempted to counter it by temporarily assimilating his prisoners to the condition of hostages, but merely as a preventive measure the legitimacy of which thereby becomes evident, and should not be equivocally interpreted in any other sense. The difference between the two opposing parties is here, again, perfectly clear.

"In our desire to avoid inaccuracy we will not attempt to deny that exceptional cases of execution by certain units of Franco's partisans may perhaps have occurred, particularly in outlying villages, where troops of the line have not exclusively been employed. That on some rare occasions men, goaded to fury by the unbelievable sights recorded in General Franco's already alluded to official report, have allowed their indignation to get the better of their reason to an extent regrettable in its form, if in reality justifiable, may be regarded as an unavoidable event condoned in every war."

If we ignore the statements of the witnesses hostile to Franco, very little remains of the case against the Nationalist troops. The only writer, so far as I know, who is friendly to Franco, and might be subpoenaed by the Reds for the prosecution is Helen Nicholson, whose book, *Death in the Morning*, has already been referred to. Her book describes Granada during the siege.

The surrounding country was dominated by the Reds, and Granada was held by a minute garrison, whose position was compromised by such hostile

elements as remained in the town. Men who are holding out against great odds seldom show mercy to the enemy within the gates, and Granada was no exception to this general rule. Spy fever was no doubt as rampant in Granada as in Great Britain during the Great War, and no mercy was shown either to Communists or Anarchists or to those who harboured the declared enemies of Nationalist Spain. You have only to read the chapter on Malaga in Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell's book to realise why no mercy could be expected by such active members of Communist and Anarchist organisations as fell into the hands of the Nationalists.

Sir Peter, whose sympathies are with the extreme Left, describes the incessant murders which these men committed. It is not surprising that some Communists and Anarchists have been shot ; it is surprising that so few have been shot.

Helen Nicholson saw two men and a Communist whom they had sheltered, in defiance of the regulations, driven off in a lorry, and she was told that they were being driven to execution. The men had been beaten by the Fascists to make them confess.

"The summary executions that filled everyone with disgust and horror were recognized, with some reluctance, as a war-time measure which must be endured. Whatever errors or harshnesses were committed by the military authorities, they were as milk-and-water compared to the calculated brutalities of the Reds."

Left Wing reviewers have dismissed as "mere hearsay" Helen Nicholson's account of Red atrocities, and accepted as direct evidence her testimony as to the execution of Communists in Granada. I do wish people would use technical terms in their correct sense.

Helen Nicholson *witnessed* no executions, though she saw prisoners, who had been beaten to make them confess, being driven off, presumably to execution, and her evidence of atrocities, on both sides, is in the main hearsay evidence. But not entirely.

“At the taking of Almendralejo they” (the Moorish troops) “wept like children at the sight of the prison courtyard where the Reds had crucified the prisoners around the walls. These were political hostages taken from the best Catholic families. The bodies still hung there, with their feet and legs burned away—petrol had been poured over them and set alight, while the victims were still living.” This is not hearsay evidence, for the Portuguese journalist Feliz Corrlia (Address : Rua duz Soviano 44, Lisbon) witnessed this scene, and has sworn an affidavit to this effect. The important distinction is that between witnesses friendly and unfriendly to those who are charged with atrocities. Helen Nicholson, as the mother of a Spanish Nationalist, is an impressive witness against the Nationalists, whereas the Portuguese journalist is less impressive as a witness against the Reds as most Portuguese are hostile to the Reds. Moreover, I have checked the Portuguese account with the second Burgos report on atrocities and suspect his story of exaggeration.

“The prisoners in the convent,” I am quoting from the official report, “crowded into the church, and on hearing the first shot of the liberating army, the Communists began to sling bombs and bottles containing inflammable liquids at their victims. These horrors lasted until five in the afternoon, and those who had escaped death were set free by the Nationalist troops.”

A detailed list of those who were killed, wounded and burned is given in the report.

The contrast between the Portuguese statement and the official report confirms the integrity of those who prepared this report, and the sincerity of their ambition to confine themselves to facts which could be proved beyond all possible doubt.

Though many of the stories of Red atrocities reported to the author are probably true, my case against the Reds would only be weakened if I quoted statements for which no adequate evidence is offered in her book. I have no wish to emulate the methods adopted in compiling the atrocity reports issued by the Spanish Embassy in London. On the other hand, I am impressed by her story of first hand interviews with victims of the Reds. I know from my own experience in Spain that there is a world of difference between the way in which Spaniards retail hearsay atrocities, and the manner in which people describe the things which have happened to themselves. I do not lay claim to any special intuition, but the look in the eyes of a man who has *seen* such things is unmistakable. In the discussion of atrocities I have limited myself to evidence as evidence is understood in a court of law, and the expression of remembered evil which one sees on the faces of those who have suffered is not evidence, nor can those who have seen this expression translate it into words or pass on to the reader his sense of certainty. But to one who has been in wartime Spain there is a ring of truth in the record of the author's meeting with a lady in Seville.

"She spoke in a low voice, very quietly: 'I have seen terrible sights—babies less than a year old, with knives thrust through their little bodies. . . . Men whose arms had been cut off. I hope,' she went on in the same monotonous, unemotional tone, 'that some



of the mutilated ones will live, so that people can see them, and know what the Communists have done. People can't believe such things, you know, unless they've seen them.' "

And that, of course, is the difficulty. Alas, this is not one of the cases of which one can say, "Blessed are those who have not seen and who have yet believed." Not blessed in this case, only intelligent.

## CHAPTER XVI

### “THE SAD AND BITTER PROFILE”

LET us suppose that a Popular Front came into power in Great Britain, and that the supporters of the Popular Front during the election campaign included leading Liberals such as Professor Gilbert Murray and Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, and eminent scientists with Left Wing sympathies such as Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell and Professor J. B. S. Haldane, and let us suppose that during the first session of the new Parliament St. Paul's cathedral and the offices of *The Times* were burned to the ground, and that the police and the fire brigade had instructions from the Government not to interfere. Let us assume that leading Conservatives were murdered by the score, that their murderers were not brought to justice, and that as a culmination to these atrocities Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the Leader of the Opposition, was assassinated by four policemen acting under the instructions of Scotland Yard.

To make our analogy complete we must further assume that Professor Gilbert Murray, Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, Professor Haldane and Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell fled to Italy, and published statements in which they expressed their great regret for the part which they had played in bringing the Popular Front into power.

Leading Liberals such as Madariaga, Unamuno and Lerroux, idolized by Bloomsbury while they were regarded as supporters of the Left, differ from English Liberals in two important respects. They know Spain and they do not support the Valencia Government.

It has been suggested that Unamuno, the famous Rector of Salamanca, who has recently died, wavered in his support of the Nationalist cause. Nobody, however, has claimed that he transferred his allegiance to the Red Government. He is said to have made an impatient comment on the presence of the Italians in Salamanca. Similar comments were often heard on the lips of Frenchmen during the Great War, but even those Frenchmen who most bitterly resented the friendly invasion of Paris by officers on leave from the British and American armies were never suspected of waning devotion to the national cause.

In Spain, as in Russia and in revolutionary France, the intellectuals who preached revolution have lived to regret the results of their crusade.

“This is not it,” exclaimed José Ortega y Gasset, deputy and Professor at the University of Madrid, “this is not it; the Republic has a sad and bitter profile.”

Eduardo Ortega y Gasset, the leader of the Radical Socialist Left, was no less disillusioned. “The Republic fails by the incompetence, laziness and vanity of its rulers, who strive to disguise their incapacity behind a series of exceptional measures that outrage the spirit of democracy which is essential to the régime.”

Señor Garcia Valdecasas, Professor at the University of Granada wrote, “Those who failed as rulers have been succeeded by men, already devoid of prestige, who are incapable of understanding the august

function of leadership, and who rival each other in the task of destruction. . . . Spain is being impoverished. Consternation will spread when the country learns the value of the cattle that have been destroyed, the trees that have been cut down, the set-back suffered by agriculture, the paralysation of credit, and the general annihilation of wealth."

Nobody would have deduced from our Left Wing Press that the sun of Republicanism had risen on so sad a scene, but the lawlessness in the early years of the Republic was only the prelude to the Red Terror which followed the election of the "Popular Front." It was this Red Terror which drove Radicals like Lerroux, the doyen of Spanish republicans, and more than once Premier in Republican Spain, into the Nationalist camp.

Radicals in our own country who are flirting with Communism should take warning by the fate of Radicals in Valencia when the war broke out.

"There are many," wrote Lerroux, "of whom nothing has been heard and of whom one fears to have tidings. In the city and province of Valencia not only the Radical Deputies have been murdered, but in certain villages all the members of the Radical Party have been exterminated. At Malaga and Alicante the Radicals were literally hunted down. The blood toll taken of the Radical Party in Spain is far greater than that taken of the Church and, perhaps, than that taken of the Civil Guard, which was so savagely sacrificed."

Zamara, President when the Popular Front came into power, described the ease with which the extremists terrorized the weak and vacillating Moderates. "The Government allowed the mob, which by now had fallen

a prey to the agitators, to become masters of the streets and of the Government itself."

Don Salvador de Madariaga is the author of an excellent book on Spain in the Modern World series. His attitude in this war might be described as one of malevolent neutrality to the Left. He does not support Franco, but no Nationalist has been more caustic in his comments on our Left Wing intellectuals.

"Led by a kind of mental inertia," he writes, "to take for granted that all that lies on the left is liberal, many of these men have overlooked the tremendous significance of the abjuration by the masses of that Liberalism to which they owe their emancipation. The intellectual sympathizers with Communism have not been deterred by the explicit contempt for Liberalism in general, and for liberty of thought in particular, which is one of the few features of Communism to be found both in its theory and in its practice. They do not seem to be in the least perturbed by the obvious subversion of values implied in the deliberate humiliation of the mental worker considered by Communism as the auxiliary of the manual worker; and even now, after so much experience, they go on cheerfully confusing the issue not only between Communism and democracy, which is bad enough, but between Communism and liberty, which would be comic if it were not tragic.

"We are asked to believe that the issue is between Fascism and Communism, and, in the name of democracy and liberty, we are bidden to espouse the cause of Communism."

The most striking condemnation of the Popular Front is the *mea culpa* of Dr. Gregorio Marañón. Marañón is the President of the Academy of Medicine

of Madrid and famous for his discoveries in connection with the endocrine glands. His book, *Problem of the Sexes*, has been translated into nearly every language. He was a deputy in the Cortes and one of the founders of the Republic. He is a Radical who has proved his convictions by suffering for them. He was imprisoned under the dictator Primo de Rivera at a time when Largo Caballero was drawing handsome pay as a Councillor of State, and this is what he says :

“ My true story ? It is an act of contrition !

“ I have been misled, I have been mistaken. Save for a few new-fangled Catholics who persist in their prejudice in favour of the Communists, all the intellectuals of Spain think as I do, speak as I do and, like me, have had to flee from Republican Spain to save their lives.

“ From the standpoint of a scientist one should recognize one's mistakes.

“ *Peccavi !* The Revolution was brought about by us. We desired it and prepared it ; and it sprang from our strongest reactions against the outrages which freedom of thought suffered. The execution of Ferrer produced a feeling of revulsion in me. The Monarchy dealt itself a death blow by killing Ferrer. From the blood of another martyr, the journalist Sirval, who was killed in prison during the Asturian affair, the Popular Front was two years later to draw its strength in propaganda.

“ True, our intellectual standing has already stamped us as the representatives of progress over against the old historic Spain, but Ferrer and Sirval furnished the decisive sentimental argument that inflamed us.

“ But what has happened since then ? You know what has happened ; but I have seen it. Thirty thousand Ferrers, guilty of freedom of thought, have

been shot without a trial. Five thousand Sirvals have been killed in prison with hand-grenades.

"Thousands of men and women are still being murdered every day on the mere suspicion of independence of opinion.

"The same acts have led to the same reactions on my part. I did not wait for these hecatombs to dissociate myself from stupid murderers, from frenzied primitives, who hate all science and intellect. . . .

"The present situation allows of no half-way house. For one thing, the die is cast. Franco is certain to win, and his victory will give me the greatest satisfaction. In any case, there can be no comparison between the two régimes. Primo de Rivera's dictatorship, from which I suffered personally and bodily, was, compared with the Red tyranny, an amiable dictatorship. The intellectuals who were fortunate enough to be residing in the territory under Nationalist control have neither had their lives threatened nor been obliged to go into exile.

"You can see for yourself. In all the hotels in Paris and in the large towns of France you will find political refugees from Spain. All of them are people who have escaped from Red Spain. Not one has found it necessary to leave Nationalist Spain.

"At bottom only one thing matters ; and that is that Spain, Europe, and mankind should be freed from a system of bloodshed, an institution of murder, the advent of which we accuse ourselves of having prepared while labouring under a tragic misapprehension."